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CHRISTIAN PHILOSOPHY:

OR, AN ATTEMPT TO DISPLAY

BY INTERNAL TESTIMONY,

THE

EVIDENCE AND EXCELLENCE

OF

REVEALED RELIGION.

WITH

AN APPENDIX,

ON MR. PAINE'S PAMPHLET, ON PRAYER, ETC.

By VICESIMUS KNOX, D. D.
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Hoc Philosophiæ genus in affectibus situm est, verius quam in syllogismis; vita est magìs, quàm disputatio; Afflatus potius quam eruditio; transformatio magìs, quam ratio. ERASMUS.

Tantum esto docilis et multum in hâc Philosophia promovisti. Ipsa suppeditat Doctorem Spiritum, qui nulli sese lubentius impertit, quàm simplicibus animis. At rursum ita non deest infimis, ut summis etiam sit admirabilis. Quid autem aliud est Christi Philosophia, quam ipse Renascentiam vocat, quam instauratio bentè conditæ naturæ. IBID.

ΠΝΕΥΜΑ ΖΩΟΠΟΙΟΥΝ, 1 COR. XV. 45.

FIRST AMERICAN EDITION,

WITH A TRANSLATION OF ALL THE GREEK, LATIN, ETC.
QUOTATIONS, ANNEXED.

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W. L. Shoemaker
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PREFACE.

AS every attempt to illustrate and recommend opinions on RELIGION, which oppose prejudices, is peculiarly obnoxious to the misconceptions of the ignorant, the misrepresentation of the malevolent, and the rash censure of the thoughtless; (who rudely and hastily condemn, what they scarcely allow themselves even time to understand;) I think it proper to entreat all who honour this book with any degree of their attention, duly to consider the AUTHORITIES, human as well as scriptural, on which it is founded; and not to reject doctrines in which their own happiness is most deeply concerned, till they shall have invalidated those *authorities*, and proved themselves superior in sagacity, learning, and piety, to the great men whose sentiments I have cited in support of my own. Let the firm phalanx of surrounding authorities be first fairly routed, before the opponents level their arrows, even bitter words, at him who, in these papers, ventures to enforce a doctrine, unfashionable indeed, but certainly the doctrine of the Gospel.

There is no doubt but that my subject is the most momentous which can fall under the contemplation of a human being; and I therefore claim for it, as the happiness of mankind is at stake, a dispassionate and unprejudiced attention.

The moral world, as well as the political, appears at present, to be greatly out of order. Moral confusion, indeed, naturally produces political. Let all who love their species, or their country, calmly consider whether the neglect or rejection of Christianity may not be the real cause of both: and let those who are thus persuaded, co-operate with every attempt to revive and diffuse the TRUE SPIRIT OF THE GOSPEL. "Let us meekly instruct "those that OPPOSE THEMSELVES,"* (if God, peradventure, will *give them* repentance to the acknowledging of the *truth*, "not being over-"come of evil, but overcoming evil with "good."†

Nor let a private clergyman, however inconsiderable, be thought to step out of his province, in thus endeavouring to tranquillize the tumult of the world, by calling the attention of erring and wretched mortals to the gospel of peace. He is justified, not only by the general principles of humanity, but by the particular command of the religion of which he is a minister. Thus saith the apostle:

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* 2 Tim. ii. 25.

† Romans, xii. 21.

"Feed the flock of God, as much as lieth "in you, *taking* the *oversight* thereof, not by "*constraint*, but *willingness;* not for FILTHY "LUCRE, but of a ready mind.* Take heed "to *all* the flock, over the which the HOLY "GHOST hath made you *overseers*, to feed "the *Church* of GOD, which he hath purchased with his own blood."†

This I have humbly attempted; and, in imitation of a most excellent prelate,‡ I have adapted my book to *all;* yet various parts of it more particularly to *various descriptions* of men; some to the great, some to the learned, but the greater part to the *people:* remembering the Apostle's example, who says, "To "the weak became I as weak, that I might "gain the weak: I am made all things to all "men, that I might by all means save some; "and this I do for the GOSPEL'S SAKE, that "I might be a partaker thereof with you."‖

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* 1 Pet. v. 2. † Acts, xx. 28.

‡ Bishop Saunderson, who preached in an *appropriate* manner, *ad aulam, ad clerum, ad populum*. See the titles of his Sermons.

‖ 1 Cor. xi. 22.

And now, readers, before you proceed any farther, let me be permitted to say to you, " The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, and " the love of God, and the fellowship of the " Holy Ghost, be with you," in your progress through this book, and also through life, even to its close.

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CHRISTIAN PHILOSOPHY:

OR,

THE EVIDENCE AND EXCELLENCE

OF

REVEALED RELIGION.

SECTION I.

Cupimus enim investigare quid verum fit; neque id solum, quod cum veritate, PIETATEM quoque præterea erga Deum habeat conjunctam. SADOLET.

INTRODUCTORY.

I ENTER on the subject of this volume with unaffected diffidence. I tread on holy ground with awe. Though much of my life, devoted to letters from the earliest age, has been spent in reading the best writers on the Christian doctrine, and more in contemplation of it, yet a sense of its high importance, and of my own fallibility, has long restrained the impulse which prompted me to engage in its public discussion. Nothing but conscious rectitude of intention, co-operating with the hope of obtaining the aid of God's holy Spirit, and the reader's indulgence, could animate the tremulous mind in an enterprise to which it feels and avows itself unequal. A conviction that the subject is peculiarly seasonable, has contributed to overcome reluctance. The TIMES indeed appear to me to call upon every professor of Christianity to vindicate, in the manner best adapted to his abilities and opportunities, its controverted truth, its insulted honour; and if I shall be fortunate enough to communicate one suggestion to the wavering mind, which may conduce to this great purpose, my labour will not be in vain, nor my undertaking deemed rashly adventurous. I shall have accomplished my wish. To diffuse the sunshine of religious hope and confidence over the shadowy path of life; to dissipate the gloom of doubt and despair; to save a soul from death; objects so desirable, inspire an ardour which enables zeal to triumph over timidity.

That unbelief in Christ is increasing in the present age, and that the spirit of the times is rather favourable to its increase, has been asserted by high authority, and is too notorious to admit denial. The apostacy of a great nation, in the most enlightened and polished part of Europe; the public, unblushing avowal of atheism among some of its leaders; the multiplication of books on the Continent, in which Christianity is treated as a mere mode of fanaticism; all these circumstances have combined, with others, to cause not only an indifference to the religion of Christ, but contempt and aversion to his very name. It were easy to cite contumelious reproaches of his person, as well as audacious denials of his claim to divine anthority. But I will not pollute my page, which however it may be deformed by error, shall not be stained with the transfusion of blasphemy. It is to be wished that all such works could be consigned to immediate and everlasting oblivion; but, I am sorry to say that they are diffused with an industry, which, if it appeared in making proselytes to virtue, would be in the highest degree meritorious. Almost every individual in our own country can now read; and manuals of infidelity, of infidelity, replete with plausible arguments, in language level to the lowest classes, are circulated among the people, at a price which places them within reach of the poorest reader. They are despised by the rich and neglected by the learned, but they fall into the hands of the poor, to whom any thing in *print* bears the stamp of authority. At the same time, it must be lamented that there are treatises of a higher order, on the side of infidelity, which come recommended to the superior ranks, to men of knowledge and education, with all the charms of wit and elegance.

But it cannot be said that the apologists and defenders of Christianity, in our country, have been few, or unfurnished with abilities natural and acquired. Great have been the efforts of our profoundest scholars, both professional divines and laymen, in maintaining the cause of Christianity, and repelling by argument, by ridicule, by invective, by erudition, the assaults of the infidel. But what shall we say? Notwithstanding their stupendous labours, continued with little intermission, the great cause which they maintained, is evidently, at this moment on the decline. Though many of them, not contented with persuasion and argument, have professed to DEMONSTRATE the truth of the Christian religion, it is certain that a very great number of men in Christian countries continue unpersuaded, unconvinced, and totally blind to their *demonstration*. Such being the case, after all their voluminous productions, is it not to conclude that their modes of defence, however celebrated, are either erroneous or defective? Had their success been equal to their labours and pretensions, infidelity must now have been utterly exterminated.

I feel a sincere respect for the learned labours of theologists, the subtilty of schoolmen, the erudition of critics, the ingenuity of controversialists; but I cannot help thinking that their productions have contributed rather to the amusement of recluse scholars already persuaded of Christianity, than to the conversion of the infidel, the instruction of the PEOPLE. It appears to me, that some of the most elaborate of the writings in defence of Christianity are too cold in their manner, too metaphysical or abstruse in their arguments, too little animated with the spirit of piety, to produce any great or durable effect on the heart of man, formed as he is, not only with intellectual powers, but with fine feelings and a glowing imagination. They touch not the trembling fibres of sensibility. They are insipid to the palate of the people. They have no attractions for the POOR, the great multitude to whom the *gospel* was particularly *preached*. They are scarcely intelligible but to scholars in their closets, and while they amuse, without convincing the understanding, they leave the most susceptible part of man, his bosom, unaffected. The busy world, eager in pursuit of wealth, honour, pleasure, pays them no regard; though they are the very persons whose attention to religion, which they are too apt to forget entirely, ought chiefly to be solicited. The academic recluse, the theologist by profession, may read them as a task or as an amusement; but he considers them as works of erudition and exercises of ingenuity, claiming great praise as the product of literary leisure, but little adapted to impress the heart, or convert the infidel or the profligate. The people are *erring and straying* like lost sheep, but in these calls they cannot recognize the voice of the shepherd. Such works indeed seldom reach the people; and while they are celebrated in academic cloisters, their very existence is unknown among the haunts of men, in the busy hum of cities; where it is most desirable that they should be known, because there the great majority of human creatures is assembled, and there also the poison of temptation chiefly requires the antidote of religion. What avails it that defences of Christianity are very learned and very subtle, if they are so dry and unaffecting as to be confined in their effects to sequestered scholars, far removed from the active world, and probably so firmly settled in the faith, as to require no new persuasives, no additional proofs to render them faithful followers of Jesus Christ?

Apologies and attacks of this kind have very little effect in silencing infidel writers or changing their opinions. They frequently furnish fresh matter for dispute, and indeed put arms into the hands of the enemy. By provoking discussion on points that were at rest, they rouse sophistry from its slumbers, and blow the trumpet of polemical wars, which do great mischief before the re-establishment of peace. In the issue, the contending parties are silenced rather from weariness in the contest, than from conviction; and *Te Deum*, as is usual in other wars, is sung by those who are said to be vanquished, as well as those who claim the honour of undisputed victory.

Thus it has happened that the writings of men, no less benevolent in their intentions than able in their exertions, have sometimes not only done no good to their cause, but great injury. They have revived old cavils and objections, or invented new, in order to display ingenuity in refuting them; cavils and objections which have frequently been answered, or which might never have occurred; but which, when once they *have* occurred, produce *suspicion* and unsettled notions on topics never doubted, and among honest men whose faith was firmly established. Such conduct is like that of a physician, who should administer doses of arsenic to his patients, in order to prove to them, at their risk, the sovereign power of his *nostrum*. The venom, finding a constitution favourable to its operation, triumphantly prevails, and the preventive remedy cannot rescue the sufferer from his hapless fate.

I am persuaded, that even a sensible, thinking, and learned man might live his whole life in piety and peace, without ever dreaming of those objections to Christianity, which some of its most celebrated defenders have collected together from all ages and a great variety of *neglected* books, and then combined in a single portable volume, so as to render it a convenient SYNOPSIS *of infidelity.* What must be the consequence? It must at least disturb the repose of the sensible, thinking, and learned man; and if it should be read and understood by the simple, the unlearned, the unthinking, and the *ill-disposed*, I am of opinion that its *objections* would be studied, its *solutions* neglected; and thus a very large number of *recruits* enlisted volunteers in the army of unbelievers.

As an exemplification of what I have here advanced, I mention, in this place, Bishop Warburton's View of Lord Bolingbroke's Philosophy. There the unbeliever sees the scattered arguments of scepticism and unbelief all picked and culled for him, without any trouble of his own, and marked with inverted commas, so as to direct the eye, without loss of time, to their immediate perusal. The book becomes an *anthologia* of infidelity. The flowers are gathered from the stalks, and conveniently tied up in a nosegay. The essence is extracted and put into a phial commodious for the pocket, and fitted for hourly use. The late Bishop Horne, in his facetious Letters on Infidelity, has also collected passages from *obscure* books and pamphlets, and sent them abroad in such a manner as must of necessity cause them to be read and received, where they never would have found their way by their native force. These ingenious and well-meaning divines resuscitate the dead, and give life to the still-born and abortive offspring of dullness and malignity. I might mention many more instances of similar imprudence, in men of the deepest erudition and the sincerest piety; but I am unwilling to follow their example, in pointing out to unbelievers compendiums, abridgments, and manuals of sceptical cavil. To say in their excuse that they *refute* those arguments which they insert so liberally from the writings of the unbeliever, may prove our candour, but not our judgment or knowledge of human nature. Evil is learned sooner and remembered longer than good; and it would be better to let many pamphlets of the deists sink into oblivion, than to preserve and extend them, by extracting their most noxious parts, and mixing them with the productions of men of learning and piety. The refutations are often long, laboured, and tedious, while the objections are short and lively. They are therefore either not read or soon forgotten, while a flippant sarcasm attracts attention and fixes itself in the memory. It must also be allowed, that the refutations are too often unsatisfactory: and that the weakness of a fence invites new attacks, and gives fresh courage to the enemy.

I think the style and manner of some among the celebrated defenders of Christianity extremely improper. It is not respectful. It treats *Jesus Christ* as if he were inferior to the person who takes upon him to examine, as he phrases it, the *pretensions* of Jesus Christ. To speak in an authoritative, inquisitorial language of the author of that religion by which the writer himself professes to hope for salvation, can never serve the cause of Christianity. Think of a poor, frail, sinful mortal sitting a self-appointed judge, and like a lawyer in a human court of judicature, arraigning Jesus Christ, the Lord of life, just as a venal solicitor might have questioned the two thieves that were crucified with him, had they been accused at a modern police-office. The cold yet authoritative style of the tribunal has been much used in *examining*, as it is called, that religion which brought life and immortality to light through the gospel. You would think the learned theologist, who assumes the office of an examiner, another Pontius Pilate. He sits in the seat of judgment, and with judicial importance coldly pronounces on the words and actions of that Saviour, whom he owns to be the great Captain of salvation.

In such defences or examinations, Jesus Christ is spoken of in terms that must divest him of his *glory*, and therefore vilify him in the eyes of the gainsayers, and all unthinking people. But how, on the contrary, do the *prophets* represent him? Language has no terms of magnificence adequate to his dignity.

The prophets describe JESUS CHRIST as the most august personage which it is possible to conceive. They speak of him indeed as the seed of *the woman* and the *Son of man;* but at the same time describe him of celestial race. They announce him as a being exalted above men and angels; above "all principality and power; as "the Word and the Wisdom of God; as the Heir of "all things, by whom God made the worlds; as the "Brightness of God's glory, the express Image of his "Person."

Thus speak the prophets of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. Now let us hear an ingenious apologist and defender of him and his religion. A reverend author, highly estimable for his learning and ingenuity, and whom I sincerely esteem, speaking of Jesus Christ, in a book professedly written to vindicate his truth and honour, repeatedly calls him, "a Jewish *peasant*," and a "*peasant* of Galilee." "For what are we comparing?" says he, (in a comparison of Jesus Christ with Mahomet) "a Galilean PEASANT, accompanied with a "few fishermen, with a conqueror at the head of his "army;" and again, in the next page, "a Jewish PEASANT overthrew the religion of the world."

Unbelievers are commonly men of the world; fascinated by its pomps and vanities. Is it the most likely means to overcome their prejudices, and teach them to bow the knee to Jesus, thus to lower his personal dignity? Was there any occasion for it? Do not the prophets, as I have just now observed, exalt him above every name? Why call him PEASANT? The term I think by no means appropriate to him, supposing that it were not an injudicious degradation of his character in the eyes of unthinking worldlings and malignant unbelievers. There is something peculiarly disgusting in hearing dignified ecclesiastics, living in splendor and affluence entirely in consequence of the religion of Jesus Christ, speaking of him in their defences of his religion, as a PEASANT, as a person, compared to themselves, vile and despicable. Such arguments as this appellation is meant to support, will never render service to Christianity. The representation becomes a stumbling-block and a rock of offence. I might however produce several other instances of the great writers who have afforded precedents for such degrading appellations of Jesus Christ. But neither the infidel nor the Christian will easily believe that the man who calls his Saviour a *peasant*, after the glorious representations of him which the prophets give, feels that awe and veneration which is due to the Son of God, the Lord of life, the Saviour and Redeemer. I forbear to specify them. One instance is sufficient to point out my meaning, and shew the reason why some ingenious apologies for Christianity are totally ineffectual.

Dry argumentation and dull disquisition, unanimated by the spirit of piety and devotion, will never avail to convert unbelievers, and to diffuse the doctrines of Christianity. Life, death, heaven and hell, are subjects of too much importance to be treated by a sincere mind, duly impressed by them, with the coolness of a lawyer giving an opinion on a statute or case in which *another's* property or privileges are concerned. The spirit of piety seems to have been wanting in some of the most logical and metaphysical defenders of Christianity. They speak of Christ, when they are examining the truth of the doctrine, with calm indifference, as if they were dull virtuosos discussing the genuineness of a medal, or the authenticity of a manuscript, valuable only as an amusing curiosity. If St. Paul had been no warmer an advocate than certain famous apologists for Christ's doctrine, he would never have prevailed with the Gentiles to relinquish their polytheism, and we of this island should, at this day, have remained in the darkness of idolatry. Without the spirit of piety, all proofs and defences of Christianity are a dead letter. The multitude will not even read them; and infidels, if they do not despise them too much to attend to them at all, will only read to find fresh matter for cavil and objection.

I may be wrong in my theory. I therefore appeal to fact. The fact is evident, that, notwithstanding all that has been written to *demonstrate* Christianity, by argument drawn from reasoning and history, infidelity has increased, and is every day increasing more and more. Let those who think the dry argumentative apologies irresistibly convincing, NOW bring them forward, and silence the gainsayers at once. The demonstrations of a Huet, the evidences of a Clarke, the reasonings of a Locke, a Grotius, a Hartley, should be presented in the most striking manner, by public authority, and if they are really efficacious in producing conviction, we may be assured that infidelity will vanish at their appearance, like the mists of an autumnal morning, when the meridian sun breaks forth in full splendor. But the truth is, they are already very much diffused, and yet the Christian religion is said to be rapidly on the decline.

Therefore it cannot be blameable to attempt some other method of calling back the attention of erring mortals to the momentous truths of revealed revelation.

I have conceived an idea that our *old* English divines were great adepts in genuine Christianity, and that their method of recommending it was judicious, because I know it was successful. There was much more piety in the last century than in the present; and there is every reason to believe that infidelity was rare. Bishop Hall appears to me to have been animated with the true spirit of Christianity; and I beg leave to convey my own ideas on the best method of diffusing that spirit, in his pleasingly-pious and simple language.

" There is not," says the venerable prelate, so much " need of learning as of grace to *apprehend* those things " which concern our *everlasting peace;* neither is it our " *brain* that must be set to work, but our HEARTS. " However excellent the use of scholarship in all the " sacred employments of divinity; yet in the main act, " which imports salvation, *skill* must give place to AFFECTION. Happy is the soul that is possest of Christ, " how poor soever in all inferior endowments. Ye are " wide, O ye great wits, while ye spend yourselves in " curious questions and learned extravagancies. Ye shall " find one touch of Christ more worth to your souls than " all your deep and laborious disquisitions. *In vain shall* " *ye seek for this in your books*, if you miss it in your " BOSOMS. If you know all things, and cannot say, *I* " *know whom I have believed*, you have but knowledge " enough to know yourselves completely miserable. The " great mysteries of Godliness, which to the *great clerks* " of the world, are as a book clasped and sealed up, lie " open before him, (the pious and devout man) fair and " legible; and while those *book-men* know whom they " have heard of, *he knows whom he hath believed*."

Christianity indeed, like the sun, discovers itself by its own lustre. It shines with unborrowed light on the devout heart. It wants little external proof, but carries its own evidence to him that is regenerate and born of the Spirit. " The truth of Christianity," says a pious author, " is the Spirit of God living and working in it; " and when this Spirit is not the life of it, there the

" outward form is but like the carcase of a departed " soul."

Divinity has certainly been confused and perplexed by the learned. It requires to be disentangled and simplified. It appears to me to consist in this single point, the restoration of the *divine life*, the image of God, (lost or defaced at the fall) by the operation of the Holy Ghost.

When this is restored, every other advantage of Christianity follows in course. PURE MORALS are absolutely necessary to the reception of the Holy Ghost, and an unavoidable consequence of his continuance. The attainment of GRACE is then the UNUM NECESSARIUM. It includes in it all gospel comfort, it teaches all virtue, and infallibly leads to LIGHT, life and immortality.

SECTION II.

On the sort of Evidence chiefly recommended and attempted to be displayed in this Treatise.

Quid est fideliter Christo credere? est fideliter Dei mandata servare.
SALVIAN. *de Gub. lib.* 3.

I THINK it right to apprize my reader, on the very threshold, that if he expects a recapitulation of the external and historical evidence of Christianity, he will be disappointed. For all such evidence I must refer him to the great and illustrious names of voluminous theologists, who have filled with honour the professional chairs of universities, and splendidly adorned the annals of literature. I revere their virtuous characters; I highly appreciate their learned labours; I think the student who is abstracted from active life, may derive from them much *amusement*, while he increases his stores of critical erudition, and becomes enabled to *discourse* or *dispute* on theology. But men, able to command their time, and competently furnished with ability for deep and extensive investigation, are but a small number in the mass of mankind. That systematic or speculative treatise which may delight and instruct such men, in the cool shade of philosophical retirement, will have little effect on the minds of others who constitute the multitude of mortals, eagerly engaged in providing for the wants of the passing day, or warmly contending for the glittering prizes of secular ambition. Indeed, I never heard that the laborious proofs of Christianity, in the historical and argumentative mode, ever converted any of those celebrated *authors* on the side of infidelity, who have, from time to time, spread an alarm through Christendom, and drawn forth the defensive pens of every church and university in Europe. The infidel wits wrote on in the same cause; deriving fresh matter for cavil from the arguments of the defenders; and re-assailing the citadel with the very balls hurled from its battlements in superfluous profusion.

What, then, it may be justly asked, have I to offer? What is the sort of evidence which I attempt to display? It is an internal EVIDENCE of the truth of the gospel, consequent on OBEDIENCE to its precepts. It is a sort of evidence, the mode of obtaining which is pointed out by JESUS CHRIST himself, in the following declaration: "If any man will do HIS will, he shall KNOW of the "DOCTRINE whether it be of God*."

But how shall he know? BY THE ILLUMINATION OF THE HOLY SPIRIT OF GOD, which is promised by Christ, to those who do his will.

Therefore if any man seriously and earnestly desires to become a Christian, let him *begin*, whatever doubts he may entertain of the truth of Christianity, by *practising* those moral virtues, and cultivating those amiable dispositions, which the written gospel plainly requires, and the *grace* of God, will gradually remove the veil from his eyes and from his heart, so as to enable him to see and to love the things which belong to his peace, and which are revealed in the gospel only. Let him make the experiment and *persevere*. The result will be the full conviction that Christianity is true. The sanctifying Spirit will precede, and the illuminating Spirit follow in consequence.

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* John vii. 17.

I take it for granted, that God has given all men the means of knowing that which it imports all men to know; but if, in order to gain the knowledge requisite to become a Christian, it is necessary to read such authors as Grotius, Limborch, Clarke, Lardner, or Warburton, how few, in the great mass of mankind, can possibly acquire that knowledge and consequent faith which are necessary to their salvation?

But every human being is capable of the *evidence* which arises from the divine illumination. It is offered to all. And they who reject it, and seek only the evidence which human means afford, shut out the sun, and content themselves either with total darkness or the feeble light of a taper.

" There is" (says the excellent Bishop Sanderson) " to the outward tender of grace in the ministry of the " gospel, annexed an *inward* offer of the same to the " HEART, by the SPIRIT of *God going along with his* " WORD, which some of the schoolmen call *auxilium* " *gratiæ generale*, sufficient *of itself* to convert the soul " of the hearer, if he do not resist the Holy Ghost, and " reject the grace offered; which, as it is grounded on " these words, *Behold I stand at the door and knock*, and " upon very many passages of *scripture* beside, so it " standeth with *reason* that the offer, *if accepted*, should

" be *sufficient*, *ex parte sua*, to do the work, which, if " *not* accepted, is sufficient to leave the person, not ac" cepting the same, inexcusable."

The outward testimony to the truth of the gospel, is certainly a very strong one; but yet it is found insufficient without the inward testimony. The best understandings have remained unconvinced by the *outward testimony*; while the meanest have been fully persuaded by the co-operation of the *inward*, the divine irradiation of the Holy Ghost shining upon and giving lustre to the *letter* of revelation.

But because the doctrine of divine influence on the human mind is obnoxious to obloquy, I think it necessary to support it by the authority of some of the best men and soundest divines of this nation. Such are the prejudices entertained by many against the doctrine of divine influence and the witness of the Spirit, that I cannot proceed a step farther, with hope of success, till I have laid before my reader several passages in confirmation of it, from the writings of men who were the ornaments of their times, and who are at this day esteemed no less for their orthodoxy and powers of reason than their eloquence. I make no apology to my reader for the length of the quotations from them, because I am sure he will be a gainer, if I keep silence that they may be heard in the interval. My object is to re-establish a declining opinion, which I think not only true, but of prime importance. I therefore withdraw myself occasionally, that I may introduce those advocates for it, whose very names must command attention. If I can but be *instrumental* in reviving the true Spirit of Christianity, by citing their authority, their's be the praise, and mine the humble office of recommending and extending their salutary doctrine.

" And if it shall be asked (to express myself nearly in the words of Archbishop Wake) why I so often chuse the drudgery of a *transcriber*, the reason is shortly this: I hoped that quotations from departed writers of great and deserved fame would find a more general and unprejudiced acceptance with all sorts of men, than any thing that could be written by any one now living, who, if esteemed by some, is yet in danger of being despised by more; whose prejudice to his person will not suffer them to reap any benefit by any thing, however useful, that can come from him; while such passages as these which I cite, must excite respect and attention, unmixed (as the authors are dead) with any malignant sentiment or prepossession against them, such as might close the eyes of the understanding against the radiance of truth."*

SECTION III.

On the prejudices entertained against this Sort of Evidence, and against all divine and supernatural Influence on the Mind of Man.

SINCE the time of archbishop Laud, the most celebrated defenders of Christianity have thought it proper to expatiate, with peculiar zeal, on the excellence of natural religion. They probably had reasons for their conduct; but it must not be dissembled, that in extolling natural religion they have appeared to depreciate or supersede revelation. The doctrine of *su-*

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* The following text may, I think, confirm the opinion advanced in this Section, that the *best* EVIDENCE will arise from OBEDIENCE:

" And we are his witnesses of these things; and so is also the " HOLY GHOST, whom God hath given to them that OBEY " him." Acts, v. 37.

pernatural assistance, the great privilege of Christianity, has been very little enforced by them, and indeed rather discountenanced, as savouring of enthusiasm, and claiming, if true, a decided superiority over their favourite religion of nature.

Upon this subject, a very sensible writer thus expresses his opinion:

" Towards making and forming a Christian, if *super-*
" *natural assistance* of the divine Spirit was necessary at
" the beginning of the gospel, I do not see what should
" render it less necessary at any time since, nor why it
" may not be expected NOW. Human learning and hu-
" man wisdom have rashly and vainly usurped the place
" of it.

" It is observable that these *old* principles are still to be
" found among dissenters, in a good measure, which is
" the reason why their opponents have dropped the use
" of them.

" As these doctrines were the principles and language
" of the dissenters, and others, who followed the stan-
" dard of the Parliament against King Charles the First,
" though they were not the particular motives of the war,
" nor could contract any just blame from the unhappy
" issue of that war; yet, at the restoration of King
" Charles the Second, the resentment which took place
" against dissenters ran high, and I apprehend led the
" church clergy not only to be angry with the *men*, but
" to forsake their principles too, though right and inno-
" cent in themselves, and aforetime held in common
" among all Protestants."

This, the author thinks, gave rise to the excessive zeal for enforcing natural religion, and for mere moral preaching, to the exclusion of the distinguishing doctrines of Christ, and particularly those sublime mysteries respecting the operation of the Holy Ghost, the very life and soul of Christianity.

"Every thing," says he, "besides *morality* began from "that time, to be branded with the odious term of *enthusiasm* and *hypocrisy*. That the cause of religion (observes the same writer) has declined for many years, "every person appears sensible. Among the various "reasons assigned for it, the principal, in my opinion, "is, that the established ministers have suffered it to die "in their own hands, by departing from the old method "of preaching, and from their first and original tenets; "which has given countenance to what is called natural "religion, in such a measure, as to shut out revealed "religion and supersede the gospel.

"It is in vain to cry out against deists and infidels, "when the Protestant watchmen have deserted their "post, and themselves have opened a gap for the enemy. Learning and oratory, it must be owned, are "arrived at great perfection, but our *true old divinity* is "gone. Amid these splendid trifles, the GOSPEL is "*really* LOST.*"

It is certain, that the profligate court of Charles the Second, in its endeavours to discredit the dissenters, many of whom were admirable scholars and divines, as well as holy and exemplary men in private life, contributed much to explode all doctrines concerning the SPIRIT. Unfortunately those clergymen who wished to be favoured at court, too easily conformed their doctrines to its wishes; and arguments from the pulpit united with sarcasms from the seat of the scorner, to render all who maintained the doctrine of grace suspected of enthusiasm and hypocrisy. Ridicule, in the hands of the author of Hudibras, though intended only to serve political purposes, became a weapon that wounded religion in its vitals.

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* See a Letter signed *Paulinus*, published in 1735.

The sect of Christians denominated Quakers, certainly entertain many right notions respecting divine influence: and therefore, as the Quakers were disliked by the church, the doctrines which they maintained were to be treated with contempt. The SPIRIT, whose operations they justly maintain, became, under the direction of worldly policy, a word of reproach to them. Consequently aspiring clergymen, wishing to avoid every doctrine which could retard their advancement, or fix a stigma of heterodoxy upon them, were very little inclined to preach the necessity of divine illumination. They feared the opprobrious names of enthusiasts or hypocrites, and so became ashamed of the gospel of Christ.

In process of time, arose the sect of the Methodists; who, however they may be mistaken in some points, are certainly orthodox in their opinions of the divine agency on the human soul. They found it in the scriptures, in the liturgy, in the articles, and they preached it with a zeal which to many appeared intemperate, and certainly was too little guided by discretion. The consequence was, that the *spiritual doctrines*, already vilified by the court of Charles the Second, and by the adversaries of the Quakers, became objects of general dislike and derision.

In the meantime, the gospel of Jesus Christ suffered by its professed friends as well as declared enemies. Regular divines of great virtue, learning, and true piety, feared to preach the Holy Ghost and its operations, the main doctrine of the gospel, lest they should countenance the Puritan, the Quaker, or the Methodist, and lose the esteem of their own order, or of the higher powers. They often contented themselves, during a long life, with preaching morality only; which, without the Spirit of Christianity, is like a beautiful statue from the hand of a Bacon; however graceful its symmetry and polished its materials, yet wanting the breath of LIFE, it is still but a block of marble.

These prejudices remaining at this day, I have thought it right to recommend the sort of evidence which this book attempts to display, by citing the *authority* of great divines, who, uninfluenced by secular hopes or fears, have borne witness to the truth as it is in Jesus. They are among the most celebrated theologists of this nation; and such as few among living or recent writers will presume to vie with, in extent of knowledge, in power of expression, and zeal for Christianity.

Bitter is the anger of controversialists in divinity. Arrows dipt in venom are usually hurled at a writer, who ventures to recommend a doctrine which they disapprove. I must seek shelter under the shields of such men as Bishop Taylor, Doctor Isaac Barrow, and others, in and out of the establishment, who fought a good fight and KEPT THE FAITH, having no regard to worldly and sinister motives, but faithfully endeavouring to lead those, over whom they were appointed guides, by the radiance of gospel light, from the shadowy mazes of error into the pleasant paths of piety and peace.

Whatever *obloquy may follow the teaching of such doctrine*, I shall incur it with alacrity, because I believe it to be the truth, and that the happiness of human nature is highly concerned in its general reception. I will humbly say, therefore, with St. Paul, "I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ Jesus, for it is the POWER "of God unto salvation."*

And as to those who deny the doctrine of divine influence, I *fear* they are guilty of blasphemy against the Holy Ghost. I speak diffidently, as it becomes every mortal on a subject so momentous; but let those who are eager to deny and even deride the doctrine, consider duly what is meant by the sin against the Holy Ghost, and let them remember this tremendous declaration of our Saviour himself, that BLASPHEMY AGAINST THE HOLY GHOST SHALL NOT BE FORGIVEN.* All other sins, we are expressly told, may be remitted, but on this the gates of mercy are closed. The denial of the Spirit's energy renders the gospel of no effect, extinguishes the living light of Jesus Christ, and involves wretched mortals in the darkness and death of Adam, fallen from the state of primitive perfection. It is represented as the greatest of all sins, because it is productive of the greatest misery.

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* Rom. i. 16.

SECTION IV.

The proper Evidence of the Christian Religion is the Illumination of the Holy Ghost, shining into the Hearts of those who do not close them against its Entrance. The Opinion of Dr. Gloucester Ridley cited.

NONE says St. Paul, can say JESUS IS THE LORD, but by the HOLY GHOST.† If, then, St. Paul be allowed to have understood the Christian religion, it is certain, that mere *human testimony* will never convince the infidel, and produce that faith which constitutes the true Christian. Our theological libraries might be cleared of more than half their volumes, if men seeking the EVIDENCE of *Christianity*, would be satisfied with the declaration of St. Paul, and of the great Author of our religion.

There is a faith very common in the world, which teaches to believe, as an historical fact, that a person of

* Matth. xii. 31.

† 1 Cor. xii. 3.

the name of Jesus, a very good man, did live on earth, and that he preached and taught, under the direction of God or divine providence, an excellent system of morality; such, as, if duly observed, would contribute to their happiness, and recommend them to divine favour. But this kind of faith is not the right faith; it believes not enough, it is not given by the *Holy Ghost;* for he, in whom God dwelleth, confesseth that Jesus is the Son of God, and the SAVIOUR of the world*; but they who acknowledge Jesus only as a good man teaching morality, know him not as a SAVIOUR. Socrates taught fine morality; and so did Seneca, Epictetus, and many more; but they had not and could not teach the knowledge which leadeth to salvation.

"Illuminating grace," says Dr. Gloucester Ridley, "consists not in the assent we give to the HISTORY of "the gospel, as a narration of matters of fact, sufficiently supported by HUMAN EVIDENCE; for this may "be purely the effect of our study and learning. The "collating of copies, the consulting of history, the comparing the assertions of friends and the concessions of "enemies, may NECESSITATE† such a belief, a faith "which the devils may have, and doubtless have it. "This sort of faith is an *acquisition* of our own, and not "a GIFT." But FAITH IS THE GIFT OF GOD.

"There may be a faith," continues Dr. Ridley, "which is not the work of the Spirit in our hearts, but "entirely the effect of human means, our natural faculties assisted by languages, antiquities, manuscripts,

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* 1 John, iv. 13, 14, 15.

† Πιστις ουκ ἡ γεωμετρικαις αναγκαις, αλλ’ η ταις του πνευματος ενεργειαις εγγινομενη. BASIL in *Psal.* 195.—The right faith is not that which is FORCED by mathematical demonstration, whether we *will* or not; but that which grows in the mind from the operation or energies of the SPIRIT.

“ criticism, and the like, without any *divine aid*, except the *bare letter of the revelation;* and as this faith may rise out of human abilities, so may it be attended with pride in our supposed accomplishments, *envy* of others superior skill, and bitter *strife* against those who mistake or oppose such truths; and is therefore no manifestation of that Spirit which resisteth the *proud*, and dispenses its graces only to the *humble.* THIS WISDOM DESCENDETH NOT FROM ABOVE. But *the true saving* faith, at the same time that it informs the understanding, influences the WILL AND AFFECTIONS; it enlightens the eyes of the heart*, says the apostle: it is *there*, in the HEART, that the Christian man believeth; and if *thou believest with thine* HEART, *thou shalt be saved*†; while infidelity proceedeth from an averseness of our affections,—*from an evil heart of unbelief*‡.”

It is not therefore strange, that learned apologists, well acquainted with scripture, should, after reading these strong declarations, that the HEART must be impressed before faith can be fixed in it, should studiously avoid every topic which addresses itself to the *affections*, and coldly apply themselves to the understanding, in a language and manner which might become a mathematical lecturer solving a problem of Euclid.

Infidelity is increasing, and will continue to increase, so long as divines decline the means of conversion and persuasion which the scriptures of the New Testament declare to be the only *effectual* means; so long as they have recourse to human reason and human learning ONLY, in which they will always find opponents very powerful. The Lord opened the heart of Lydia*, and then she attended to the things which were spoken of Paul. The Lord opens the HEARTS of all men at some period of their lives; but the vanity of the world, the cares of gain, the pride of life, *shut* them again, and reject the Holy Ghost. It is the business of divines to dispose those who are thus unfortunate and unwise, to be ready to receive the divine guest, should he again knock at the door of their hearts; but in doing this, they must preach the true *gospel*, which is not a system of mere human morality or philosophy, but the doctrine of grace†.

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* Πεφωτισμενους τους οφθαλμους τη καρδιας. *Ephesians*, i. 18.—Enlightening the eyes of the HEART. Almost all the old MSS. read καρδιας, and not διανοιας, as it stands in our printed copies.

See Mill's Lectiones Variantes. RIDLEY.

† Rom. x. 9. ‡ Heb. ii. 12.

SECTION V.

The true and only convincing Evidence of the Religion of Christ, or the Illumination of the Holy Ghost is offered to ALL.

FROM the eternal Fountain of light, both natural and spiritual, there streams a light *which lighteth every one that cometh into the world.* Whoever loves that which is good and just and true, and desires to act a virtuous part in his place allotted to him in this world, whether high or low, may be assured of the *blessing* of of heaven, displaying itself not perhaps in worldly riches or honours, but in something infinitely more valuable,—a SECRET INFLUENCE upon his heart and understanding, to direct his conduct, to improve his nature, and to lead him, though in the lowly vale, yet along the path of peace.

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* Acts, xvi. 14.

† It must be taught *mediatè per verbum*, IMMEDIATÈ *per* SPIRITUM.

The nature of all men was depraved by the fall of Adam. The assistance of God's Holy Spirit was withdrawn. Christ came to restore that nature, and to bring down that assistance, and leave it as a GIFT, a legacy to all mankind after his departure.

In *Adam* ALL die, says St. Paul, but in Christ shall *all* be made alive. That is in Adam *all* die a spiritual death, or lose the *Paraclete*, the particle of the divine nature, which was bestowed on man on his creation; and in Christ all are made alive, spiritually alive, or rendered capable, if they do not voluntarily choose darkness rather than light, of the divine illumination of the Holy Ghost. The *film* is taken from the eyes of all, but the eye-lids remain, which may be CLOSED by voluntary connivance, or by wicked presumption.

"I will pour out my SPIRIT upon all flesh*."

"The grace which bringeth salvation hath appeared "unto ALL men."—"This is the light which lighteth "*every man* that cometh into the world."—"It is his "will, that all men should be saved, and come to the "knowledge of the truth."—"Christ came to save sin-"ners; and we have before proved, both Jews and Gen-"tiles, that they are ALL under sin."—"Come unto me "ALL ye that labour and are heavy laden."—"He has "propitiated for the sins of the WHOLE world. His "grace has been openly offered to ALL men in the gos-"pel†."

These passages, which no sophistry can elude, are sufficient to prove that the internal EVIDENCE of the gospel has a great advantage over the external, in the circumstance of its universality. All may be convinced by it who are willing*. But can this be said of dry, logical, systematic testimonies, which require learning, sagacity, and *time*, to be comprehended? Such testimonies are fit for *few*, and appear unlikely to produce vital religion in any. They serve men to *talk* about, they furnish matter for logomachy; but they leave the heart unaffected. Neither Jesus Christ nor his apostles thought proper to address men *systematically*. And are critics, linguists, and logicians wiser than the Author of their religion, and better informed than his apostles?

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* Joel, ii. 28.

† 1 Tim. ii. 4. 1 Tim. i. 15. Rom. iii. 9. Matth. ii. 28. 1 John, ii. 2 Tit. ii. 2.

The word of God is like a *two-edged sword*, invincible where it is properly used; but the word of man is comparatively a feeble weapon, without point or edge. The word of man alone, though adorned with all eloquence, learning, and logical subtilty, will never stop the progress of unbelief. The word of God rightly explained, so as to administer grace to the hearers and readers, will still preserve and extend Christianity, as it has hitherto done, notwithstanding all the opposition of the world, and those unfeeling children of it, whose hearts are hardened and understandings darkened by the pride of life. If, therefore, as St. James advises, any of you lack WISDOM, let him ask of God, that *giveth* TO ALL men *liberally*, and upbraideth not, and it shall be given him. The wisdom here meant is that which maketh *wise* unto salvation; and certainly is not to be found in the cold didactic writings of those who rely entirely on their own reason, and deny or explain away the doctrine of grace.

Grace is the living gospel. Perishable paper, pens, ink, and printer's types, can never supersede the daily, hourly operation of the omniscient and omnipotent Creator and Preserver of the universe.

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* Η μεν γαρ χαρις εις ΠΑΝΤΑΣ εκκεχυται. CHRYSOSTOM *in Joan. Hom.*—*For grace indeed is poured out upon* ALL.

Let us remember, "that to EVERY MAN is given the "manifestation of the Spirit to profit withal." 1 Cor. xii. 7.

Mr. Paine, in his attack on Christianity, sums up all his objections at the close. The first and greatest is this, and I give it in his own words, though it is contrary to my practice, and opinion of propriety, often to cite the cavils of unbelievers: "The idea or belief of a "word of God existing in PRINT, or in WRITING, or in "SPEECH, is inconsistent with itself, for reasons already "assigned. These reasons, among many others, are "the want of an universal language; the mutability of "language; the errors to which translations are subject; "the possibility of totally suppressing such a word; the "probability of altering it, or of fabricating the whole, "and imposing it upon the world."

Now these objections cannot possibly be made to the *evidence* of the Spirit of God, the *manifestation of the Spirit given to every* man; because the Spirit speaks an *universal language*, addressing itself to the feelings of the heart, which are the same, whatever sounds are uttered by the tongue; because its language is not subject to the *mutability* of human dialects; because it is far removed from the possibility of misrepresentation by translators; because it cannot be totally suppressed; because it cannot be altered; because it cannot be *fabricated* or imposed on the world; because it is an EMANATION from the God of truth, the same yesterday, to-day, and forever. This evidence sheds its light all over the Christian world, and is seen, like the sun in the heavens, by all who use their visual powers, unobstructed by self-raised clouds of passion, prejudice, vice, and false philosophy.

SECTION VI.

Opinions of Bishop Taylor respecting the Evidence of the Holy Spirit; " shewing" (as he expresses it) " how " the Scholars of the University shall become most " LEARNED and most USEFUL."

" WE have examined all ways, in our inqui-
" ries after religious truth, but one; all but GOD'S WAY*.
" Let us, having missed in all the other, try this. Let
" us go to God for truth; for truth comes from God
" only. If we miss the truth, it is because we will not
" find it; for certain it is, that all the truth which God
" hath made NECESSARY, he hath also made legible and
" plain; and if we will open our eyes we shall see the
" sun, and if *we will walk in the light we shall rejoice in*
" *the light.* Only let us withdraw the curtains, let us
" remove the impediments, and the sin that doth so
" easily beset us. That is GOD'S WAY. Every man
" must, in his station, do that portion of duty which God
" requires of him; and then he shall BE TAUGHT OF
" GOD all that is fit for him to learn; there *is no other way*
" *for him but this.* The fear of the Lord is the begin-
" ning of wisdom; and a good understanding have all
" they that do thereafter. And so said David of him-
" self: *I have more understanding than my teachers; be-*
" *cause I keep thy commandments.* And this is the only
" way which Christ has taught us. If you ask, what is
" truth? you must not do as Pilate did, ask the question,
" and then go away from him that only can give you an
" answer; for as God is the Author of truth, so he is
" the TEACHER of it, and the way to learn is this; for

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* See Bishop Taylor's VIA *Intelligentiæ.*

" so saith our blessed Lord; If any man will do his will, " he *shall know of the doctrine whether it be of God or no.*

" This text is simple as truth itself, but greatly comprehensive, and contains a truth that alone will enable " you to understand all mysteries, and to expound all " prophecies, and to interpret all scriptures, and to " search into all secrets, all, I mean, which concern our " happiness and our duty. It is plainly to be resolved " into this proposition:

" THE WAY TO JUDGE OF RELIGION IS BY DOING " OUR DUTY; AND THEOLOGY IS RATHER A DIVINE " LIFE THAN A DIVINE KNOWLEDGE.

" In heaven indeed we shall first see and then love; " but here on earth we must first love, and love will " open our eyes as well as our hearts, and we shall then " see and perceive and understand.

" Every man understands more of religion by his " affections than by his reason. It is not the wit of the " man, but the spirit of the man; not so much his head " as his heart that learns the DIVINE PHILOSOPHY.

" There is in every righteous man a NEW VITAL PRINCIPLE. The spirit of grace is the spirit of wisdom, " and teaches us by secret inspirations, by proper arguments, by actual persuasions, by personal applications, " by effects and energies; and as the soul of man is the " cause of all his vital operations, so is the Spirit of God " the life of that life, and the cause of all actions and " productions spiritual; and the consequence of this is " what St. John tells us of; *Ye have received the* UNCTION *from above, and that anointing teacheth you all* " *things*,—all things of some one kind; that is, certainly all things that pertain to life and godliness; all that " by which a man is *wise and happy*. Unless the soul " have a new life put into it, unless there be a vital principle within, unless the Spirit of life be the informer of " the spirit of the man, the word of God will be as DEAD in the operation as the body in its powers and possibilities.

“ God's Spirit does not destroy reason, but heightens it. God opens the heart and creates a new one, and without this creation, this new principle of life, we may hear the word of God, but we can *never understand it;* we hear the sound, but are never the better. Unless there be in our hearts a secret conviction by the Spirit of God, the GOSPEL ITSELF IS A DEAD LETTER.

“ Do we not see this by daily experience? Even those things which a good man and an evil man KNOW, they do not know both alike. An evil man *knows* that God is lovely, and that sin is of an evil and destructive nature, and when he is reproved he is *convinced;* and when he is observed, he is ashamed; and when he has done, he is unsatisfied; and when he pursues his sin, he does it in the dark. Tell him he shall die, and he sighs deeply, but he *knows* it as well as you. Proceed, and say that after death comes judgment, and the poor man believes and trembles; and yet, after all this, he runs to commit his sin with as certain an event and resolution as if he *knew* no *argument* against it.

“ Now since, at the same time, we see *other* persons, not so LEARNED, it may be, not so much versed in the *scriptures*, yet they say a thing is good and lay hold of it. They believe glorious things of heaven, and they live accordingly, as men that believe themselves. What is the reason of this *difference?* They both read the scriptures; they read and hear the same sermons; they have capable understandings; they both believe what they hear and what they read; and yet the *event is vastly different*. The reason is that which I am now speaking of: the one understands by one principle, the other by another; the one understands by NATURE, the other by GRACE; the one by human learning, the other by DIVINE; the one reads the scriptures without, and

" the other within; the one understands as a son of man, " the other as a son of God; the one perceives by the " proportions of the world, the other by the measures " of the Spirit; the one understands by REASON, the " other by LOVE; and therefore he does not only understand the sermons of the Spirit, and perceive their " MEANING, but he pierces deeper, and knows the meaning of that meaning; that is, the SECRET OF THE SPIRIT, that which is spiritually discerned, that which " gives life to the proposition and activity to the soul. " And the reason is, that he hath a divine principle " within him, and a new understanding; that is plainly, " he hath LOVE, and that is more than KNOWLEDGE, as " was rarely well observed by St. Paul. Knowledge " puffeth up; but charity* edifieth; that is, charity " maketh the best scholars. No sermons can build you " up a holy building to God, unless the love of God be in " your hearts, and purify your souls from all filthiness " of the flesh and spirit.

" A good life is the best way to understand wisdom " and religion, because, by the *experiences* and relishes " of religion, there is conveyed to them a sweetness to " which all wicked men are strangers. There is in the " things of God, to those who practise them, a deliciousness that makes us love them, and that love admits us " into God's cabinet, and *strangely clarifies the understanding by the purification of the heart.* For when " our reason is raised up by the Spirit of Christ, it is " turned quickly into EXPERIENCE; when our faith relies upon the principles of Christ, it is changed into " *vision;* and so long as we know God only in the ways " of men, by *contentious* learning, by ARGUING and dispute, we see nothing but the shadow of him, and in " that shadow we meet with many dark appearances,

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* Αγαπη—Love of God.

“ little certainty, and much conjecture; but when we
“ know him λογω αποφαντικω, γαληνῃ νοερᾷ, with the eyes
“ of holiness and the instruction of *gracious* experiences,
“ with a quiet spirit and the peace of enjoyment, *then*
“ we shall hear what we never heard, and see what our
“ eyes never saw; *then* the mysteries of Godliness shall
“ be open unto us, and clear as the windows of the
“ morning; and this is rarely well expressed by the
“ apostle. “ If we stand up from the dead and awake
“ from sleep, then Christ shall give us LIGHT.”

“ For though the scriptures themselves are written
“ by the Spirit of God, yet they are written within and
“ without; and besides the light that shines upon the
“ face of them, *unless there be a light shining within our*
“ *hearts*, unfolding the leaves, and interpreting the mys-
“ terious sense of the Spirit, convincing our consciences
“ and preaching to our hearts; to look for Christ in the
“ leaves of the gospel, is to look for the living among
“ the dead. There is a life in them; but that life is,
“ according to St. Paul's expression, hid with Christ in
“ God, and unless the spirit of God draw it forth, *we*
“ shall not be able.

“ Human learning brings excellent ministeries to-
“ wards this: it is admirably useful for the reproof of
“ heresies, for the detection of fallacies, for the letter
“ of the scriptures, for *collateral testimonies*, for exterior
“ advantages; but there is something beyond this, that
“ human learning without the addition of *divine* can
“ never reach.

“ A good man, though unlearned in *secular* know-
“ ledge, is like the windows of the temple, narrow with-
“ out and broad within; he sees not so much of what
“ profits not *abroad*, but whatsoever, is *within*, and con-
“ cerns religion and the glorifications of God, that he
“ sees with a broad inspection; but all human learning
“ without God is but blindness and folly. One man

" discourses of the sacrament, another *receives* Christ; " one discourses for or against transubstantiation; but " the good man feels himself to be changed, and so " joined to Christ, that he only understands the true " sense of transubstantiation while he becomes to Christ " bone of his bone, flesh of his flesh, and of the same " spirit with his Lord.

" From holiness we have the best instruction. For " that which we are taught by the Holy Spirit of God, " this new nature, this vital principle within us, it is that " which is worth our learning: not vain and empty, idle " and insignificant notions, in which, when you have " laboured till your eyes are fixed in their orbs, and your " flesh unfixed from its bones, you are *no better and no* " *wiser.* If the Spirit of God be your teacher, he will " teach you such truths as will make you know and love " God, and become like to him, and enjoy him forever, " by passing from *similitude to union* and eternal fruition.

" Too many scholars have lived upon air and empty " notions for many ages past, and troubled themselves " with tying and untying knots, like hypochondriacs in " a fit of melancholy, thinking of nothings, and troub- " ling themselves with nothings, and falling out about " nothings, and being very wise and very learned in " things that are not, and work not, and were never " planted in Paradise by the finger of God. If the Spi- " rit of God be our teacher, we shall learn to avoid evil " and to do good, to be wise and to be holy, to be pro- " fitable and careful; and they that walk in this way shall " find more peace in their consciences, MORE SKILL IN " THE SCRIPTURES, more satisfaction in their doubts, than " can be obtained by all the polemical and impertinent " disputations of the world. The man that is wise, he " that is conducted by the Spirit of God, knows better " in what Christ's kingdom doth consist than to throw " away his time and interest, his peace and safety, for

" what? for religion? no: for the body of religion? not
" so much: for the garment of the body of religion? no,
" not for so much: but for the *fringes* of the garment
" of the body of religion; for such, and no better, are
" many religious disputes; things, or rather circum-
" stances and manners of things, in which the soul and
" spirit are not at all concerned. The *knowledge* which
" comes from godliness is ϑειοτερον τι πασης αποδειξεως,
" something more certain and divine than all demon-
" stration and human learning.

" And now to conclude:—to you I speak, fathers and
" brethren, you who are or intend to be of the clergy;
" you see here the best compendium of your studies, the
" best alleviation of your labours, the truest method of
" wisdom. It is not by reading multitudes of books,
" but by studying the truth of God; it is not by labori-
" ous commentaries of the doctors that you can finish your
" work, but the exposition of the Spirit of God; it is not
" by the rules of metaphysics, but by the proportions of
" holiness; and when all books are read, and all argu-
" ments examined, and all authorities alledged, nothing
" can be found to be true that is unholy. The learning
" of the fathers was more owing to their piety than their
" skill, more to God than to themselves. These were
" the men that prevailed against error, because they
" lived according to truth. If ye walk in light, and live
" in the spirit, your doctrines will be true, and that
" truth will prevail.

" I pray God to give you all grace to follow this wis-
" dom, to study this learning, to labour for the under-
" standing of godliness; so your time and your studies,
" your persons and your labours, will be holy and use-
" ful, sanctified and blessed, beneficial to men and pleas-
" ing to God, through him who is the wisdom of the
" Father, who is made to all that love him, wisdom, and
" righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption."

Will any one among our living theologists controvert the merits of Bishop Taylor? Is there one whom the public judgment will place on an equality with him? Will any one stigmatize him as an ignorant enthusiast? His strength of understanding and powers of reasoning are strikingly exhibited in his *Ductor dubitantium*, in his *Liberty of prophesying*, and in his polemical writings. I must conclude, that he understood the Christian religion better than most of the sons of men; because, to abilities of the very first rank, he united in himself the finest feelings of devotion. His authority must have weight with all serious and humble inquirers into the subject of Christianity, and his authority strongly and repeatedly inculcates the opinion which I wish to maintain, that the best evidence of the truth of our religion is derived from the operation of the Holy Spirit on every heart which is disposed to receive it.

And I wish it to be duly attended to, that the discourse from which the above extracts are made, was not addressed to a popular assembly, but to the clergy of an university, and at a solemn visitation. The Bishop evidently wished that the doctrines which he taught might be disseminated among the people by the parochial clergy. They were disseminated; and in consequence of it, Christianity flourished. They must be again disseminated by the Bishops and all parochial clergy, if they sincerely wish to check the progress of infidelity. The minds of men must be impressed with the sense of an influential DIVINITY in the Christian religion, or they will reject it for the morality of Socrates, Seneca, the modern philosophers, and all those plausible reasoners, to whom this world and the *things which are seen* are the chief objects of attention. The *old divines* taught and preached with wonderful efficacy, because they spoke as men having authority from the Holy Ghost, and not as the disputers of this world, proud of a little science acquired from *heathen* writers in the cloisters of an academy. There was a celestial glory diffused around the pulpits of the old divines; and the hearers, struck with veneration, listened to the preacher as to an undoubted oracle. Full of *grace* were his lips; and *moral* TRUTH was beautifully illuminated by *divine*. She easily won and firmly fixed the affections of men, clothed, as she was, with light as with a garment.

SECTION VII.

Passages from the celebrated Mr. John Smith, *Fellow of Queen's College, Cambridge, corroborative of the Opinion that the best Evidence of the Christian Religion arises from the Energy of the Holy Spirit*[*].

" DIVINE truth is not to be discerned so much " in a man's brain as in his heart. There is a divine " and spiritual sense which alone is able to converse in- " ternally with the life and soul of divine truth, as mix- " ing and uniting itself with it; while vulgar minds be- " hold only the body and outside of it. Though in itself " it be most intelligible, and such as the human mind " may most easily apprehend, yet there is an INCRUS- " TATION, as the Hebrew [†] writers call it, upon all cor- " rupt minds, which hinders the lively taste and relish " of it.

" The best acquaintance with religion is a KNOW- " LEDGE TAUGHT OF GOD[‡]: it is a light which de- " scends from heaven, which alone is able to guide and " conduct the souls of men to that heaven whence it

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[*] See his Select Discourses.

[†] *Incrustamentum immunditiei*—An incrustation of filth.

[‡] ϑεοδιδακτος γνοσις.

" comes. The Christian religion is an influx from God " upon the minds of good men; and the great design of " the gospel is to unite human nature to divinity.

" The gospel is a mighty efflux and emanation of life " and spirit, freely issuing forth from an omnipotent " source of grace and love; that godlike, vital influence, " by which the Divinity derives itself into the souls of " men, enlivening and transforming them into its own " likeness, and strongly imprinting upon them a copy of " its own beauty and goodness: like the spiritual virtue " of the heavens, which spreads itself freely upon the " lower world, and subtilely insinuating itself into this " benumbed, feeble, earthly matter, begets life and motion in it; briefly, it is that whereby God comes to " dwell in us, and we in him.

" The apostle calls the law, the ministration of the " letter and of death, it being in itself but a dead letter, " as all that which is without a man's soul must be; but " on the other side, he calls the gospel, because of the " intrinsical and vital administration of it in living impressions upon the souls of men, the *ministration of the* " *spirit*, and the *ministration of righteousness;* by which " he cannot mean the HISTORY of the gospel, or those " CREDENDA propounded to us to believe; for this would " make the gospel itself as much an external thing as " the law was; and so we see that the preaching of " Christ crucified was to the Jews a *stumbling-block, and* " *to the Greeks foolishness.* But indeed he means a " VITAL EFFLUX from God upon the souls of men, " whereby they are made partakers of life and strength " from him.

" Though the *history* and outward communication of " the gospel to us *in scriptis* is to be always acknowledged " as a special mercy and advantage, and certainly no less " privilege to the Christians, than it was to the Jews, to " be the depositaries of the oracles of God, yet it is plain

" that the apostle, where he compares the law and the " gospel, means something which is more than a piece " of book-learning, or an historical narration of the free " love of God, in the several contrivances of it for the " redemption of mankind.

" The evangelical or new law is an efflux of life and " power from God himself, the original of life and " power, and produceth life wherever it comes; and to " this double dispensation of law and gospel does St. " Paul clearly refer, 2 Cor. iii. 3. You are the epistle " of Christ ministered by us, WRITTEN NOT WITH INK, " but with THE SPIRIT OF THE LIVING GOD.—*Not in* " *tables of stone;* which last words are a plain gloss upon " that mundane kind of administering the law, in a mere " external way, to which he opposeth the GOSPEL.

" The gospel is not so much a *system* and body of " saving divinity, as the spirit and vital influence of it " spreading itself over all the powers of men's souls, and " quickening them into a DIVINE LIFE; it is not so pro- " perly a doctrine that is wrapt in ink and paper, as it " is VITALIS SCIENTIA, a living impression made on the " soul and spirit. The gospel does not so much con- " sist *in verbis* as *in virtute;* in the written word, as in " an internal energy."

He who wishes to have an adequate idea of this profound scholar and most excellent man, will find a pleasing account of him in Bishop Patrick's sermon at his funeral, subjoined to the SELECT DISCOURSES, which abound with beautiful passages, illustrative of the true Christian philosophy.

SECTION VIII.

Dr. Isaac Barrow's *Opinion of the Evidence of Christianity, afforded by the illuminating Operation of the Holy Spirit; and on the Holy Spirit in general.*

" OUR reason is shut up, and barred with va-
" rious appetites, humours, and passions against gospel
" truths; nor can we admit them into our hearts, except
" God, by his spirit, do *set open our mind*, and work a
" free passage for them into us. It is he who com-
" manded the light to shine out of darkness, that must,
" as St. Paul speaketh, *illustrate our hearts with the know-*
" *ledge of these things.* An UNCTION from the Holy One,
" clearing our eyes, softening our hearts, healing our
" distempered faculties, must, as St. John informeth us,
" TEACH and persuade us this sort of truths. A hearty
" belief of these seemingly incredible propositions must
" indeed be, as St. Paul calleth it, the GIFT of God, pro-
" ceeding from that Spirit of faith whereof the same
" apostle speaketh; such faith is not, as St. Basil saith,
" engendered by geometrical *necessities*, but by the ef-
" fectual operations of the Holy Ghost. Flesh and
" blood will not reveal to us, nor can any man with
" clear confidence say that Jesus is the Lord (the MES-
" SIAS, the infallible Prophet, the universal Lawgiver,
" the Son of the living God) but by the *Holy Ghost.*
" Every spirit which *sincerely* confesseth him to be the
" Christ, we may, with St. John, safely conclude to be
" of God; for of ourselves we are not sufficient, as the
" apostle says, λογιζεσθαι τι, to reason out or collect any
" of these things. We NEVER, of our own accord, with-
" out DIVINE ATTRACTION, *should come unto Christ;* that
" is, should effectually consent unto and embrace his in-
" stitution, consisting of such *unplausible* propositions

“ and precepts. Hardly would his own disciples, who
“ had so long enjoyed the light of his conversation and
“ instruction, admitted it, if he had not granted them
“ that *Spirit of truth*, whose work it was οδηγειν, to lead
“ them in this unknown and uncouth way; αναγγελλειν to
“ tell them again and again, that is, to instil and incul-
“ cate these crabbed truths upon them; υπομιμνησκειν, to
“ admonish, excite, and urge them to the marking and
“ minding them; hardly, I say, without the guidance of
“ this Spirit, would our Lord's disciples have admitted
“ divers *evangelical* truths, as our Lord himself told
“ them. I have, said he, many things beside to say to
“ you, but ye cannot as yet bear them; but when he, the
“ Spirit of truth, shall come, he shall CONDUCT YOU INTO
“ ALL TRUTH.

“ As for the mighty sages of the world, the learned
“ scribes, the subtle disputers, the deep politicians, the
“ wise men according to the flesh, the men of most re-
“ fined judgment and *improved* REASON in the world's
“ eye, they were more ready to deride than to regard,
“ to impugn than to admit these doctrines; to the
“ Greeks, who sought wisdom, the preaching of them
“ seemed foolishness.

“ It is true, some few sparks or flashes of this divine
“ knowledge may possibly be driven out by *rational* con-
“ sideration. Philosophy may yield some twilight glim-
“ merings thereof. Common reason may dictate a faint
“ consent unto, may produce a *cold tendency* after some
“ of these things; but a *clear perception*, and a resolute
“ persuasion of mind, that full assurance of faith and in-
“ flexible confession of hope ομολογια της ελπιδος ακλινης,
“ which the apostle to the Hebrews speaks of, that full
“ assurance of understanding, that abundant knowledge
“ of the divine will in all spiritual wisdom and under-
“ standing, with which St. Paul did pray that his Colos-
“ sians might be replenished; these so perfect illustra-

“ tions of the mind, so powerful convictions of the heart,
“ do argue *immediate influences* from the Fountain of life
“ and wisdom, the DIVINE SPIRIT. No external instruction
“ could infuse, no interior discourse could excite
“ them; could penetrate these opacities of ignorance,
“ and dissipate these thick mists of prejudice,
“ wherein nature and custom do involve us; could so
“ thoroughly awaken the lethargic stupidity of our souls;
“ could supple the refractory stiffness of our wills; could
“ mollify the stony hardness of our hearts; could void
“ our natural aversion to such things, and quell that
“ *φρονημα σαρκος*, that carnal mind, which, St. Paul says, is
“ enmity against God, for it is not subject to the law of God,
“ neither indeed can be; could depress those *υψωματα*,
“ those lofty towers of self-conceit, reared against the
“ knowledge of God, and demolish those *οχυρωματα*,
“ those bulwarks of self-will and perverse stomach, opposed
“ against the impressions of divine faith, and captivate
“ *παν νοημα*, every conceit and device of ours to
“ the obedience of Christ and his discipline. Well,
“ therefore, did St. Paul pray in behalf of his Ephesians,
“ that God would bestow on them the Spirit of wisdom
“ and revelation in the acknowledgment of him,
“ and that the eyes of their mind might be enlightened,
“ so as to know the hope of their calling; that is, to understand
“ and believe the doctrines of Christianity.****

“ We proceed now to the peculiar offices, functions,
“ and operations of the Holy Spirit: Many such there
“ are in an especial manner attributed or appropriated
“ to him; which, as they respect God, seem reducible
“ to two general ones: the declaration of God's mind,
“ and the execution of his will; as they are referred to
“ man, (for in regard to other beings, the scripture doth
“ not so much consider what he performs, it not concerning
“ us to know it,) are especially the producing in us
“ all actions requisite or conducible to our eternal happi-

" ness and salvation; to which may be added, the inter-" cession between God and man, which jointly respect " both.

" First, it is his especial work to disclose God's mind " to us; whence he is styled the *Spirit of truth, the Spi-" rit of prophecy, the Spirit of revelation;* for that all " supernatural light and wisdom have ever proceeded " from him. He instructed *all the prophets that have " been since the world began, to* know, he enabled them " to *speak*, the mind of God concerning things present " and future. Holy men (that have taught men their " duty, and led them in the way to bliss) were but his " instruments *speaking as they were moved by the Holy " Ghost.*

" By his inspiration the holy scriptures (the most full " and certain witness of God's mind, the law and testi-" mony by which our life is to be directed and regulated) " were conceived. *He guided the apostles in all truth,* " and by them instructed the world in the knowledge of " God's gracious intentions towards mankind, and in all " the holy mysteries of the gospel: *That which in other " ages was not made known unto the sons of men, as it is " now revealed unto his holy apostles and prophets by the " Spirit. Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have " entered into the heart of man, the things which God hath " prepared for them that love him; but God hath revealed " them to us by his Spirit,* saith St. Paul. *All the* KNOW-" LEDGE we can pretend to in these things doth proceed " *merely* from his *revelation,* doth wholly rely upon his " authority.

" To him it especially belongs to execute the will of " God, in matters transcending the ordinary power and " course of nature. Whence he is called the *power of " the Most High,* (that is, the substantial power and vir-" tue of God,) the *finger of God* (as by comparing the " expression of St. Luke and St. Matthew may appear);

" and whatever eminent God hath designed, he is said " to have performed by him; by him he framed the " world, and (as Job speaketh) *garnished the heavens.* " By him he governeth the world, so that all extraordi- " nary works of Providence, (when God, beside the com- " mon law and usual course of nature, doth interpose to " do any thing,) all miraculous performances are attri- " buted to his energy. By him our Saviour, by him " the apostles, by him the prophets, are expressly said " to perform their wonderful works; but especially by " him God manages that great work, so earnestly de- " signed by him, of our salvation; working in us all " good dispositions, capacifying us for salvation, direct- " ing and assisting us in all our actions tending thereto.

" We naturally are void of those good dispositions in " understanding, will, and affections which are needful " to render us acceptable unto God, fit to serve and " please him, capable of any favour from him, of any " true happiness in ourselves. Our minds naturally " are blind, ignorant, stupid, giddy, and prone to error, " especially in things supernatural and spiritual, and ab- " stracted from ordinary sense. Our wills are froward " and stubborn, light and unstable, inclining to evil, and " averse from what is truly good; our affections are very " irregular, disorderly, and unsettled; to remove which " bad dispositions, (inconsistent with God's friendship " and favour, driving us into sin and misery,) and to " beget those contrary to them, the KNOWLEDGE and " belief of divine truth, a love of goodness and delight " therein; a well composed, orderly, and steady frame " or spirit, God in mercy doth grant to us the virtue of " his Holy Spirit; who first *opening our hearts*, so as to " let in and apprehend the light of divine truth, then, " by representation of proper arguments, persuading " our reason to embrace it, begetteth divine knowledge, " wisdom, and faith in our minds, which is the work of

"illumination and instruction, the first part of his office
" respecting our salvation.

" Then by continual impressions he bendeth our inclinations, and mollifieth our hearts, and tempereth
" our affections to a willing compliance with God's will,
" and a hearty complacence in that which is good and
" pleasing to God; so breeding all pious and virtuous
" inclinations in us, reverence towards God, charity to
" men, sobriety and purity as to ourselves, with the rest
" of those amiable and heavenly virtues of soul, which
" is the work of sanctification, another great part of his
" office.

" Both these operations together (enlightening our
" minds, sanctifying our wills and affections) do constitute and accomplish that work, which is styled the
" regeneration, renovation, vivification, new creation,
" resurrection of a man; the faculties of our souls being
" so improved, that we become, as is were, other men
" thereby; able and apt to do that for which before we
" were altogether indisposed and unfit.

" He also directeth and governeth our actions, continually leading and moving us in the ways of obedience to God's holy will and law. As we live by him,
" (having a new spiritual life implanted in us,) so we
" *walk by him*, are continually led and acted by his conduct and help. He reclaimeth us from error and sin;
" he supporteth and strengtheneth us in temptation; he
" adviseth and admonisheth, exciteth and encourageth
" us to all works of piety and virtue.

" Particularly he guideth and quickeneth us in devotion, shewing us what we should ask, raising in us holy
" desires and comfortable hopes, disposing us to approach unto God with firm dispositions of mind, love,
" and reverence, and humble confidence.

" It is also a notable part of the Holy Spirit's office to
" comfort and sustain us in all our religious practice, so

" particularly in our doubts, difficulties, distresses, and " afflictions; to beget joy, peace, and satisfaction in us, " in all our performances, and in all our sufferings, " whence the title of Comforter belongeth to him.

" It is also another part thereof to assure us of God's " gracious love and favour, and that we are his children; " confirming in us the hopes of our everlasting inheri- " tance. We feeling ourselves to live spiritually by him, " to love God and goodness, to thirst after righteousness, " and to delight in pleasing God, are thereby raised to " hope God loves and favours us; and that he having, " by so authentic a seal, ratified his word and promise, " having already bestowed so sure a pledge, so precious " an earnest, so plentiful first-fruits, will not fail to " make good the remainder designed and promised us, " of everlasting joy and bliss."

Let no man be afraid or ashamed of maintaining opinions on the *divine energy*, which are thus supported by the first of scholars and philosophers, ISAAC BARROW.

SECTION IX.

Bishop Bull's *Opinion on the Evidence of the Spirit of God on the Mind of Man, and its Union with it; the loss of that Spirit by Adam's Fall, and the Recovery of it by Christ.*

" THE second way," says Bishop Bull, " by " which the Spirit of God witnesseth with our spirit, " that we are the sons of God, is by enlightening our " understandings, and strengthening the eyes of our " minds, as occasion requires, to discern those gracious " fruits and effects which God hath wrought in us.

" The Spirit of God, which in the first beginning of " things moved upon the face of the great deep, and in" vigorated the chaos, or dark and confused heap of " things, and caused light to shine out of that darkness, " can, with the greatest ease, when he pleases, cause " the light of divine consolation to arise and shine upon " the dark and disconsolate soul. And this he often " doth. I may here appeal to the EXPERIENCE of " many good Christians, who sometimes find a sudden " joy coming into their minds, ENLIGHTENING their " UNDERSTANDINGS, dispelling all clouds from thence, " warming and enlivening their affections, and enabling " them to discern the graces of God shining in their " brightness, and to FEEL them vigorously acting in " their souls, so that they have been, after a sort, " TRANSFIGURED with their Saviour, and wished, with " St. Peter, that they might always dwell on that mount " Tabor.****

" Man may be considered in a double relation; first " in relation to the *natural*, *animal*, and *earthly* life; and " so he is a perfect man, that hath only a *reasonable* soul " and body adapted to it; for the powers and faculties " of these are sufficient to the exercise of the functions " and operations belonging to such a life. But secondly, " man may be considered in order to a *supernatural* end, " and as designed to a spiritual and celestial life; and of " this life the SPIRIT OF GOD is the principle. For " man's natural powers and faculties, even as they were " before the fall, ENTIRE, were not sufficient or able " of themselves to reach such a *supernatural* end, but " needed the power of the DIVINE SPIRIT to strengthen, " elevate, and raise them. He that denies this, opposes " himself against the stream and current of the holy " scriptures, and the consent of the Catholic church. " Therefore to the perfect constitution of man, consi" dered in this relation, a reasonable soul and a body "adapted thereunto are not sufficient; but there is necessarily required an union of the DIVINE SPIRIT with both, as it were a THIRD ESSENTIAL PRINCIPLE. This, as it is a certain truth, so it is a great MYSTERY OF CHRISTIANITY.****

"The great Basil, in his homily intitled, *Quod Deus non est Author peccati*, speaking of the nature of man, as it was at first created, hath these words: * *What was the chief or principal good it enjoyed? THE ASSESSION OF GOD AND ITS CONJUNCTION WITH HIM BY LOVE; from which, when it fell, it became depraved with various and manifold evils.* So in his book, *de Spiritu Sancto*, *cap.* 15, he plainly tells us, † *The dispensation of God and our Saviour towards man, is but the recalling of him from the fall, and his return into the friendship of that God, from that alienation which sin had caused. This was the end of Christ's coming in the flesh, of his life and conversation described in the gospel, of his passion, cross, burial, and resurrection; that man, who is saved by the imitation of Christ, might regain that ANTIENT ADOPTION.* Where he plainly supposeth that man before his fall had the adoption of a son, and consequently the Spirit of adoption. And so he expressly interprets himself afterwards in the

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* "Τὶ δὲ ἦν αὐτῇ τὸ προηγούμενον ἀγαθὸν; ἡ προσεδρεία του θεοῦ, καὶ ἡ διὰ τῆς ἀγάπης συνάφεια· ἧς ἐκπεσοῦσα, τοῖς ποικίλοις καὶ πολυτρόποις ἀῤῥωστήμασιν ἐκακώθη."

† "Η του θεοῦ καὶ σωτῆρος ἡμων περὶ τὸν ἄνθρωπον οἰκονομία, ἀνάκλησίς ἐστιν ἀπὸ τῆς ἐκπτώσεως, καὶ ἐπάνοδος εἰς οἰκείωσιν θεοῦ, ἀπὸ τῆς διὰ τὴν παρακοὴν γενομενης αλλοτριώσεως· διὰ τοῦτο, ἡ μετὰ σαρκὸς ἐπιδημία Χριστοῦ· ἡ τῶν εὐαγγελικῶν πολιτευμάτων ὑποτύπωσις· τὰ πάθη· ὁ σταυρὸς· ἡ ταφὴ· ἡ ἀνάστασις, ὥστε τὸν σωζόμενον ἄνθρωπον διὰ μιμήσεως Χριστοῦ, τὴν ἀρχαίαν ἐκείνην υἱοθεσίαν ἀπο· λαβεῖν."

“ same chapter: *By the* * *Holy Spirit we are restored* “ *into paradise, we regain the kingdom of heaven, we re-* “ *turn to the adoption of sons.* Again, (*Homil. advers.* “ *Eunomium* 5, p. 117.) which have these express “ words: † *We are called in the sanctification of the Spi-* “ *rit, as the apostle teacheth. This* (Spirit) *renews us,* “ *and makes us again the image of God, and by the laver* “ *of regeneration, and the renewing of the Holy Ghost, we* “ *are adopted to the Lord, and the new creature again* “ *partakes of the Spirit, of which being deprived, it had* “ *waxed old. And thus man becomes again the image of* “ *God, who had fallen from the divine similitude, and was* “ *become like the beasts that perish.*

“ St. Cyril (7th *Dial. de Trin.* p. 653.) delivers the “ same doctrine with great perspicuity and elegancy, “ in these words ‡ *For when the animal* (*viz.* man) *had*

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* “ Διὰ ϖνεύματος ἁγίου, ἡ εις ϖαράδεισον ἀποκατάστασις· “ ἡ εἰς βασιλείαν οὐρανῶν ἄνοδος· ἡ εἰς υἱοθεσίαν ἐπάνοδος. *Vide* “ *ejusdem Libri, cap.* 9.”

† “ Ἐν ἁγιασμῷ τοῦ ϖνεύματος ἐκλήθημεν, ὡς ὁ ἀπόστολος “ διδάσκει, τοῦτο ἡμᾶς ἀνακαινοῖ, ϗ πάλιν εἰκόνας ἀναδείκνυσι “ θεοῦ, διὰ λουτροῦ ϖαμιγγενεσίας ϗ ἀνακαινώσεως ϖνεύματος “ ἁγίου υἱοθετούμεθα κυρίῳ· καινὴ ϖάλιν κτίσις μεταλαμβάνουσα “ του πνεύματος, οὗ περ ἐστερημενη πεπαλαίωτο· εἰκὼν ϖάλιν θεοῦ “ ὁ ἄνθρωπος ἐκπεσῶν τῆς ὁμοιότητος τῆς θείας, ϗ παρασυμβλη- “ θεὶς κτήνεσιν ἀνοήτοις ϗ ὁμοιωθεὶς αὐτοῖς.”

‡ “ Διανενευκότος γὰρ τοῦ ζώου ϖρὸς τὸ ϖλημμελὲς, ϗ τὴν “ εἰςποίητον ἁμαρτίαν ἐκ τῆς εἰσάπαν φιλοσαρκίας ἠῤῥωστηκότος, “ τὸ ϖρὸς θείαν εἰκόνα διαμορφοῦν αὐτόν, ϗ σημάντρου δίκην ἀποῤ- “ ῥήτως ἐντεθειμενον ἀπενοσφίζετο ϖνεύμα, φθαρτόν τε οὕτω, ϗ “ ἀκαλλὲς, ϗ τί γὰρ οὐχὶ τῶν ἐκτόπων συνειλοχὸς ἀναπέφανται; “ ἐπεὶ δὲ ὁ τῶν ὅλων γενεσιουργὸς ἀνακομίζειν ἔθελεν εἰς ἑδραιότητα, “ ϗ εὐκοσμίαν τὴν ἐν ἀρχαῖς τὸ διολισθῆσαν εἰς φθορὰν, ϖαρά- “ σημόντε, ϗ ἀκαλλὲς διὰ τὴν εἰσποίητον γεγονὸς ἁμαρτίαν, ἐνῆκεν “ αὖθις αὐτῷ τὸ ἀποφοιτῆσαν ποτε θεῖόν τε, ϗ ἅγιον ϖνεῦμα, μετ-

“ *turned aside unto wickedness, and out of too much love*
“ *of the flesh had superinduced on himself the disease of*
“ *sin,* *THAT SPIRIT WHICH FORMED HIM AFTER THE DI-*
“ *VINE IMAGE, AND AS A SEAL WAS SECRETLY IMPRESSED*
“ *ON HIS SOUL, WAS SEPARATED FROM HIM, and so he be-*
“ *came corruptible and deformed, and every way vicious.*
“ *But after that the Creator of the universe had designed*
“ *to restore to its pristine firmness and beauty that which*
“ *was fallen into corruption, and was become adulterated*
“ *and deformed by sin superinduced, he sent again into it*
“ *that divine and holy Spirit which was withdrawn from*
“ *it, and which hath a natural aptitude and power to change*
“ *us into the celestial image,* viz. *by transforming us into*
“ *his own likeness.* And in the fourth book of the same
“ work, * *When the only begotten Son was made man, find-*
“ *ing man's nature bereft of its antient and primitive good,*
“ *he hastened to transform it again into the same state, out*
“ *of the fountain of his fulness, sending forth* (the Spirit),
“ *and saying,* *RECEIVE THE HOLY GHOST.*

“ αποιοῦν εὖ μάλα πρὸς τὴν ὑπερκόσμιον εἰκόνα, ϗ πεφυκὸς ϗ δυ-
“ νάμενον διὰ τὸ πρὸς ἰδίαν ἡμᾶς μεταῤῥυθμίζειν ἐμφέρειαν.”

* “ Ὁτέ γέγονεν ἄνθρωπος ὁ μονογενὴς, ἐρήμην τοῦ πάλαι, ϗ
“ ἐν ἀρχαῖς ἀγαθοῦ τήν ἀνθρώπου φυσιν εὑρὼν, πάλιν αὐτὴν εἰς
“ ἐκεῖνο μεταστοιχειοῦν ἠπειγέτο, καθάπερ ἀπό πηγῆς του ἰδίου πλ-
“ ηρώματος ἐνιεὶς τε ϗ λέγων· λάβετε πνεῦμα ἅγιον.”

ST. CYRIL.

SECTION X.

The Opinions of Bishop Pearson *and Doctor* Scott, *Author of the Christian Life, and an Advocate for* natural *Religion, against spiritual Pretensions.*

BISHOP Pearson is in the highest esteem as a divine. His book on the Creed is recommended by tutors, by Bishops' chaplains, and by Bishops, to young students in the course of their reading preparatory to holy orders. It has been most accurately examined and universally approved by the most eminent theologues of our church, as an orthodox exposition of the Christian Creed. Let us hear him on the subject of the SPIRIT'S evidence, which now engages our attention.

" As the increase and perfection, so the original or " initiation of faith is from the Spirit of God, not only " by an EXTERNAL PROPOSAL IN THE WORD, but by an " INTERNAL ILLUMINATION in the soul, by which we " are inclined to the obedience of faith, in *assenting* to " those truths which unto a natural and carnal man are " foolishness. And thus we affirm not only the revelation of the will of God, but also the *illumination of the* " *soul of man*, to be part of the office of the Spirit of " God*."

Dr. Scott, an orthodox divine, a zealous teacher of *morality*, celebrated for a book intitled the *Christian Life*, says, " That without the Holy Ghost we can do nothing; " that he is the AUTHOR AND FINISHER of our faith, who " worketh in us to will and to do of his good pleasure. " His first office is the *informing of our minds* with the " *light* of heavenly truth. Thus the apostle prays that

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* Bishop Pearson on the Creed, Art. 8.

" the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of Glo-
" ry, would give unto them the Spirit of wisdom and
" revelation in the knowledge of him, that THE EYES
" OF THEIR UNDERSTANDINGS being enlightened, they
" might know what is the hope of Christ's calling*; and
" we are told, *that it is by* RECEIVING THE SPIRIT OF
" GOD, *that we* KNOW *the things that are freely given us*
" *of God*†.

" Now this illumination of the Spirit is twofold: first,
" external, by that revelation which he hath given us of
" God's mind and will in the holy scripture, and that
" miraculous evidence by which he sealed and attested
" it; *for all scripture is given by inspiration of God*‡; or,
" as it is elsewhere expressed, *was delivered by holy men,*
" *as they were moved by the Holy Ghost*||; and all those
" miraculous testimonies we have to the truth and di-
" vinity of scripture are from the Holy Ghost, and, upon
" that account, are called the *demonstration of the Spirit*;
" so that all the light we receive from scripture, and ALL
" the *evidence* we have that that light is divine, we de-
" rive originally from the Holy Spirit.

" But besides this *external* illumination of the Holy
" Spirit, there is also an INTERNAL one, which consists
" in impressing that external light and evidence of scrip-
" ture upon our *understandings*, whereby we are enabled
" more clearly to *apprehend*, and more effectually to *be-*
" *lieve* it.

" For though the divine Spirit doth not (at least in
" the ordinary course of his operation) illuminate our
" minds with any *new* truths, or new evidences of truth,
" but only presents to our minds those *old* and primitive
" truths and evidences which he at first revealed and
" gave to the world; yet there is NO DOUBT but he *still*

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[*] Ephes. i. 17, 18.

[†] 1 Cor. ii. 12.

[‡] 2 Tim. iii. 16.

[||] 2 Pet. i. 21.

" continues not only to *suggest* them both to our minds, " but to *urge* and *repeat* them with that importunity, " and thereby to imprint them with that clearness and " efficacy, as that if we do not, through a *wicked* preju- " dice against them, wilfully divert our minds from them " to vain or sinful objects, we must unavoidably appre- " hend them far more distinctly, and assent to them " far more cordially and effectually, than otherwise we " should or COULD have done; for our minds are *natu-* " *rally* so vain and stupid, so giddy, listless, and inad- " vertent, especially in spiritual things, which are ab- " stract from common sense, as that did not the Holy " Spirit frequently present, importunately urge, and " thereby fix these on our minds, our KNOWLEDGE *of* " *them would be so confused*, and our belief so wavering " and unstable, as that they would never have any pre- " venting influence on our WILLS and AFFECTIONS. So " that our KNOWLEDGE and BELIEF of divine things, so " far as they are *saving* and effectual to our renovation, " are the fruits and products of this INTERNAL ILLUMI- " NATION*."

SECTION XI.

Opinion of Bishop Sanderson *on the Impossibility of becoming a Christian without supernatural Assistance.*

" IT was Simon Magus's error to think that the " gift of God might be purchased with money; and it " hath a spice of his sin, and so may go for a kind of " simony, to think that spiritual gifts may be purchased " with labour. You may rise up early and go to bed

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* Scott's Christian Life, part ii. chap. 7.

" late, and study hard, and read much, and devour the " marrow of the best authors, and when you have done " all, unless God give a blessing unto your endeavours, " be as thin and meagre in regard of true and useful " learning, as Pharoh's* lean kine were after they had eaten " the fat ones. It is God that both ministereth seed to " the sower, and multiplieth the seed sown; the princi- " pal and the increase are both his."

" It is clear that *all* Christian virtues and graces, " though wrought immediately by us, and with the free " consent of our own wills, are yet the fruit of God's " Spirit working in us. That is to say, they do not pro- " ceed originally from any strength of nature, or any " inherent power in man's free will; nor are they ac- " quired by the culture of philosophy, the advantages of " education, or any improvement whatsoever of natural " abilities by the helps of art or industry: but are in " truth the proper effects of that supernatural grace " which is given unto us by the good pleasure of God " the Father, merited for us by the precious blood of " God the Son, and conveyed into our hearts by the " sweet and secret inspirations of God the Holy Ghost. " Love, joy, and peace are fruits, not at all of the flesh, " but merely of the Spirit.

" All those very many passages in the New Testa- " ment which either set forth the unframableness of " our nature to the doing of any thing that is good, " (*not that we are sufficient of ourselves to think a good* " *thought; in me, that is in my flesh, there dwelleth no good* " *thing*†; and the like,) or else ascribe our best perform- " ances to the glory of the grace of God, (*without me* " *you can do nothing. All our sufficiency is of God. Not* " *of yourselves; it is the gift of God. It is God that*

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* Genesis xli. 21.

† 2 Cor. iii. 5. Romans, vii. 18.

" *worketh in you both the will and deed*[*]; and the like,) " are so many clear confirmations of the truth. Upon " the evidence of which truth it is that our mother the " church hath taught us in the public service to beg at " the hands of almighty God that he would *endue us* " *with the grace of his Holy Spirit, to amend our lives* " *according to his holy word:* and again, (consonantly to " the matter we are in hand with, almost *in terminis*,) " that he would *give to all men increase of grace to hear* " *meekly his word, and to receive it with pure affection,* " *and to bring forth the fruits of the Spirit.* As without " which grace it were not possible for us to amend our " lives, or to bring forth such fruits, according as God " requireth in his holy word.

" And the reason is clear: because as the tree is such " must the fruit be. Do men look to gather *grapes of* " *thorns, or figs of thistles*[†]; Or can they expect from a " *salt fountain* other than brackish water? Certainly, " what is born of flesh can be no better than flesh. " Who can bring a clean thing out of that which is un- " clean[‡]? Or how can any thing that is good proceed " from a heart, all the *imaginations of the thoughts where-* " *of are only and continually evil*[||]? If we would have the " fruit good, reason will (and our Saviour prescribeth " the same method) that order be taken, *first to make* " *the tree good*[**].

" But you will say, it is impossible so to alter the " nature of the flesh as to make it bring forth good spi- " ritual fruit; as it is to alter the nature of a crab or " thorn, so as to make it bring forth a pleasant apple. " Truly, and so it is: if you shall endeavour to mend " the fruit by altering the stock, you shall find the la-

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[*] John, xv. 7. 2 Cor. iii. 5. Eph. ii. 8. Phil. ii. 13.

[†] Mat. vii. 16. [‡] Job, xiv. 4. [||] Gen. vi. 5.

[**] James, i. 21.

“ bour altogether fruitless;—a crab will be a crab still,
“ when you have done what you can: and you may as
“ well hope to wash an Ethiopian white, as to purge
“ the flesh from sinful pollution.

“ The work therefore must be done quite *another way:*
“ not by *alteration*, but ADDITION. That is, leaving the
“ old principle to remain as it was, by superinducing
“ *ab extra* a *new principle*, of a different and more kindly
“ quality. We see the experiment of it daily in the
“ grafting of trees; a crabstock, if it have a cion of some
“ delicate apple artfully grafted in it; look what branches
“ are suffered to grow out of the stock itself, they will
“ all follow the nature of the stock, and if they bring
“ forth any fruit at all, it will be sour and stiptic. But
“ the fruit that groweth from the graft will be pleasant
“ to the taste, because it followeth the nature of the
“ graft. We read of λογος εμφυτος, an engrafted word.
“ Our carnal hearts are the old stock; which, before the
“ word of God be grafted in it, cannot bring forth any
“ spiritual fruit acceptable to God: but when, by the
“ powerful operation of his Holy Spirit, the word which
“ we hear with our outward ears is inwardly grafted
“ therein, it then bringeth forth the fruit of good living.
“ So that all the bad fruits that appear in our lives come
“ from the old stock, the flesh: and if there be any good
“ fruit of the Spirit in us, it is from the virtue of that
“ word of grace that is grafted in us.”

What modern philosopher or divine can rival this great prelate? His *Prælectiones* rank him with Aristotle; his piety, with the chief of the apostles.

SECTION XII.

Bishop Smalridge *on the absolute* Necessity *of Grace.*

"HE who is not convinced of the *absolute necessity* of God's grace to invigorate his obedience to the "divine laws, must be a perfect stranger to himself, as "well as to the word of God; and must have been as "careless an observer of what passes within his own "breast, as of what is written in the holy scriptures. "When one gives himself leisure to take a survey of "his own faculties, and observes how dark-sighted he is "in the *perception* of divine truths; with what reluctance he sometimes chuses what his understanding "plainly represents to him as good, and refuses what "his own conscience directly pronounces to be evil; "how apt his affections are to rebel against the dictates "of his reason, and to hurry him another way than he "knows he should, and in his sober mind, very fain "would go; when he sets before his thoughts the great "variety of duties commanded, and of sins forbidden, "and the perverseness of his own depraved nature, "which gives him an antipathy to those duties and a "strong inclination to those sins; when he reflects on "the power and cunning of his spiritual enemies, always "alluring him to sin, and seducing him from the practice of virtue; when he weighs with himself the necessity of practising every duty, and forsaking every kind of "wickedness, in order to secure a good title to the promises of the gospel; when he takes a view of those "particular obstacles which hinder him in the exercise "of several graces, and of the strong temptations which "prompt him to the commission of several sins; when "he considers the aptness of human nature to grow "weary of performing the same things, though in them-

" selves never so pleasant, and its still greater disposi-
" tion to grow faint, when the actions continually to be
" repeated are burdensome to flesh and blood; when he
" compares the necessity of perseverance with the dif-
" ficulty of it, the prevalence of things present and sen-
" sible with the weakness wherewith those objects
" affect us that are absent and spiritual; when, I say, a
" considering man puts all these things together, he
" cannot but be convinced, that *narrow is the path that*
" *leads unto* everlasting *life*, and that without ILLUMI-
" NATION from the SPIRIT OF GOD, he shall not be able
" rightly to discern it; that *strait is the gate* which opens
" an entry into heaven; and that he cannot, by the force of
" his own natural strength, without new power given
" him from above, and the secret influences of God's
" Holy Spirit, adding force and energy to his own en-
" deavours, force his way through it. Conscious, there-
" fore, of his own weakness, he will acknowledge the
" necessity of God's grace; and being ready to sink
" through his own natural weight, unless supported by
" foreign help, he will cry out with St. Peter, *Save me,*
" *Lord, or* ELSE *I perish.*

" Some philosophers of old flattered the pride and
" vanity of men, by teaching them that they wanted
" nothing to make them virtuous, but only a firm and
" steady resolution of being so; that this resolution they
" themselves were masters of, and might exert at their
" own pleasure. They confidently boasted that their
" happiness was a thing wholly in their own power;
" that they need not ask of the gods to be virtuous, nor
" consequently to be happy, since they could be so with-
" out their aid or concurrence, or even in despite of
" them. The *Pelagians* afterwards raised their here-
" sies upon the principles which these heathen philoso-
" phers had first broached; they engaged in the quarrel
" of depraved nature against divine grace: all our disor-

" ders they would have to be the effects not of sin but of
" nature; all our evil inclinations seemed to them capa-
" ble of being subdued by our own unassisted reason;
" and they did not think the succour of any supernatu-
" ral grace necessary either for the combating of vice, or
" the maintenance of their integrity and virtue. But the
" sober Christian hath learned from the scriptures to
" speak and to think more humbly of himself, and more
" becomingly and magnificently of God; we are there
" taught that *we are not sufficient of ourselves to think*,
" much less to do, *any thing as of ourselves, but that our*
" *sufficiency is of God;* that *it is God, which worketh*
" *within us both to will and to do of his good pleasure;*
" that it is *by the Spirit* we must *mortify the deeds of the*
" *body*, if we would *live;* that it is God, who, by his Spi-
" rit, *makes us perfect in every good work to do his will*,
" *working in us that which is well-pleasing in his sight.*
" The humble and devout Christian being thus satisfied
" of the necessity of God's grace, both from his own
" experience and from the scriptures, and being *assured*
" of the VITAL INFLUENCES of this spirit from the pro-
" mises made to him in the gospel, will not be over-cu-
" rious to inquire into the secret and inconceivable man-
" ner of its operation. He will choose rather to FEEL
" these influences, than to *understand* or explain them,
" and will not doubt of that power, which, though he
" cannot give an account of as to the manner of its
" working, he plainly perceives to be great and marvel-
" lous from its mighty and wonderful effects: for when,
" in reading the holy scriptures, *he finds the veil of dark-*
" *ness removed from before his* UNDERSTANDING*;* when
" those clouds of ignorance that had overcast his mind, are
" presently dispersed; when the doubts under which he
" had for some time laboured are on a sudden cleared;
" when such pious thoughts as were wont to pass tran-
" siently are long dwelt upon, so as to leave behind them

" deep and lasting impressions; when these are suggested to him without his seeking, and are urged and " pressed upon him so importunately, that he cannot " choose but listen unto them; when, from a calm and " serious consideration of the state of his own soul, the " odiousness and danger of sin, the beauty and necessity of holiness, he is led to make good and pious resolutions of serving God with greater purity for the time " to come; when he finds a *sudden impulse* upon his spirits, rouzing him up to the performance of some important duty which he had before neglected; or an " unexpected check, stopping him in the midst of his " course, when he is rushing on blindly and impetuously to the commission of some heinous sin; when " in his *devotions he finds his attention fixed, his affections inflamed, and his heart melted within him;* when, " while the voice of God's minister preaching the saving " truths of the gospel sounds in his ears, he is sensible " of an INWARD VOICE speaking with greater force and " efficacy to his soul, to his understanding, and to his " heart: when, under the pressure of any grievous affliction, he feels unexpected joy and comfort; when " *light rises up in the* midst *of darkness;* when there is " *given unto him beauty for ashes, the oil of joy for mourning, the garment of praise for the spirit of heaviness;* " upon all these and the like occasions he is sensible of " the presence and aid of God's Holy Spirit, whose " *grace* alone is *sufficient* to all these purposes, and " whose *strength is* thus *made perfect in his weakness.*

" How the operation of God's Holy Spirit is consistent " with the freedom of our own wills; how far we are " passive and how far active in those good thoughts, " words, and works, which are wrought in us by the " influence of this Holy Spirit, the practical Christian " doth not much trouble himself to inquire. Whatsoever is good in him, that he devoutly ascribes not unto

" himself, but unto the grace of God which was afforded
" him; *O Lord, not unto me, but unto thy name be the*
" *glory;* or having by his former sins justly merited to
" be left destitute and forsaken; in the latter case he is as
" ready to make Daniel's humble acknowledgment; *O*
" *Lord, righteousness belongeth unto thee, but unto me con-*
" *fusion of face.* He will leave it to others to *dispute*
" about the nature, extent, and efficacy of this grace,
" and will make it his own chief labour to obtain, to
" cherish, and to improve it; he strives, according to
" the best of his judgment, to form right notions of its
" efficacy, but he is still more solicitous that no mis-
" takes in his opinions about it may have any dan-
" gerous influences upon his practice. He cannot be
" very wrong in his notions, whilst he believes that man's
" will is neither so free, as without God's grace to do
" good, nor so enslaved, as not to be at liberty either to
" concur with or to resist that grace; but whether these
" notions about a matter so intricate be exactly right or
" not, he is fully assured that he cannot be mistaken in
" his measures of acting, if he exerts his own endeavours
" with as much vigour and earnestness, as if by them
" alone he were finally to stand or fall; and, at the same
" time, implores God's grace with as much fervency, as
" if that alone could support him: if he neither relies so
" far on his own strength, as not humbly to acknowledge
" that it is *God alone who works in him both to will and to*
" *do*, nor so far depends on the grace of God to save
" him, as to forget that he is required to work out his
" own salvation—if lastly, at his approaches to the holy
" altar, he doth prepare himself for the reception of the
" blessed sacrament, with as much care, diligence, and
" scrupulosity, as if the benefits he there expects did
" entirely depend upon the disposition he brings along
" with him, and his own fitness to communicate, and
" yet at the same time, not trusting on his own imper-

" fect righteousness, but on God's infinite mercy, he " doth there, with faith, with humility, with reverence, " address himself to that blessed SPIRIT, who is the " *giver of every good and perfect gift*, that he may be " filled with his grace and heavenly benediction."

I cannot but hope that these opinions of a classical scholar, a man adorned with all *elegant* and *polite* learning, as well as with philosophy; a man, whose habits of life and social connections tended to remove him from all contagion of enthusiasm, will have great weight with the *elegant* and *polite* part of the world, in recommending the neglected or exploded doctrine of grace. No man needs blush to entertain the religious sentiments of Bishop Smalridge; nor can folly or fanaticism be *reasonably* imputed to divines like him, whose minds were enriched with all the stores of science, and polished with all the graces of ornamental literature.

SECTION XIII.

Human learning highly useful, and to be pursued with all Diligence, but cannot, of itself, furnish EVIDENCES *of Christianity completely satisfactory, like those which the Heart of the good Christian feels from the* divine Influence: *with the Opinion of Doctor* Isaac Watts.

LEARNING should be the handmaid of religion. She must not take upon her the office of a judge or arbitress. Her employment is highly honourable and useful, though subordinate. Let learning be cultivated, and continue to flourish and abound. Religion is the sun to the soul; the source of light and the cherisher of life. But because there is a sun, must there be no inferior lights? God has made the moon and the stars also, and pronounced that they are good.

Never let the enemies to Christianity triumph over it, by asserting that it is an enemy to learning, and tends to introduce the ignorance of barbarism. Learning, under due regulations, contributes to soften the mind, and prepare it for the divine agency. A learned, virtuous, and religious man, whose religion is VITAL and truly Christian, is a superior being, even in this mortal state, and may be imagined, by us his fellow-creatures, to be little lower than the angels.

Nobody can hold learning, and the inventions of human ingenuity, in higher esteem than myself; I look up to them with affection, and admiration. But after all, and however perfect and beautiful they may be, they are but HUMAN, the product of poor, short-lived, fallible mortals. Whatever comes from the FATHER OF LIGHTS, from him who made that MIND which is capable of learning and science, must deserve more attention and honour than can possibly be due to the most beautiful and stupendous works of human ingenuity. These are not to be slighted, but beloved, pursued, rewarded. But I am a MORTAL. Every moment is bringing me nearer to that period when the curtain shall fall, and all *these things be hidden from my eyes.* My first attention and warmest affection therefore ought to be fixed on things spiritual and eternal.

All arts, all sciences, must be secondary and instrumental to the attainment of DIVINE ILLUMINATION. I AM THE LIGHT OF THE WORLD, says Jesus Christ. Can any *reasonable* man rest satisfied without coming to the light after such a declaration? Will he be contented with the radiance of dim lights and false lights, when he is invited to approach the brilliant and the true?

Learning is necessary for the purposes of this life; it is an ornament and a defence. It is highly useful in religious investigation. It furnishes arguments to enforce morality, to persuade to all that is good and great, and to deter from folly and vice. But let it ever keep to its own office, which is certainly, in religious matters, ministerial. It can amuse; it can inform; but it cannot supply the *summum bonum;* it cannot raise fallen man to his original state. GRACE only can restore man to God's image. If learning could have done it, why were the heathens unrestored? are not the infidels often learned? and would not the advent of our Lord and Saviour have been superfluous, if learning could have repaired the ruins of the fall?

Few (as I have already said) in the mass of mankind are *learned.* They are perhaps as one to a million. What is to become of the millions then, if the gospel of Jesus Christ, by which alone they can live in the sweet tranquillity of a state of grace, and die with religious hope and confidence, cannot be received, with *sufficient evidence*, without deep learning, logical and metaphysical disputation? What is to *prove* it to *them*, who have neither books, leisure, nor ability to study, if God himself do not teach them by his SPIRIT? Blessed be his name, he has taught them, and continues to teach them. It is among the *learned* chiefly that INFIDELITY prevails. She inhabits libraries, and walks abroad in academic groves, but is rarely seen in the cottage, in the field, or in the manufactory. The poor and the unlearned do in general believe in the gospel most firmly. What is the evidence which convinces them? It is the witness of the Spirit; and thanks be to him who said *my grace is sufficient for thee.* "He that believeth on the Son of God hath this witness in himself."

The opinion of a man like Dr. Isaac Watts on the true nature of Christianity, is almost of itself decisive. He was not only a devout and zealous Christian, but a profound scholar, a natural philosopher, a logician, and a metaphysician. His life and conversation exhibited a pattern of every Christian virtue. Let us hear him.

"Every true Christian," says he, "has a *sufficient* "*argument and* EVIDENCE to support his faith, without "being able to prove the authority of any of the canonical writings. He may hold fast his religion, and be "assured that it is divine, though he cannot bring any "learned proof that the book that contains it is divine "too; nay, though the book itself should even happen "to be *lost* or *destroyed:* and this will appear, with open "and easy conviction, by asking a few such questions "as these:

"Was not this same gospel preached with glorious "success before the New Testament was written?

"Were not the same doctrines of salvation by Jesus "Christ published to the world by the ministry of the "apostles, and made effectual to convert thousands, "before they set themselves to commit these doctrines "to writing?

"And had not every sincere believer, every true con-"vert, this blessed witness in himself, that Christianity "was from God?

"Eight or ten years had passed away, after the ascen-"sion of Christ, before any part of the New Testament "was written; and what multitudes of Christian con-"verts were born again by the preaching of the word, "and raised to a divine and heavenly life, long ere this "book was half finished or known, and that among the "heathens as well as Jews. Great numbers of the "*Gentile* world became holy believers, each of them "having the *epistle of Christ written in the heart*, and "bearing about *within them* a noble and convincing "proof that this religion was divine; and that without "a *written gospel*, *without epistles*, and without a BIBLE.

"In the first ages of Christianity, for several hundred "years together, how few among the common people

“ were able to read? How few could get the possession
“ or the use of a Bible, when all sacred as well as profane
“ books were of necessity copied by writing? How
“ few of the populace, in any large town or city, could
“ obtain or could use any small part of scripture, before
“ the art of printing made the word of God so common?
“ And yet millions of these were regenerated, sanctified,
“ and saved by the ministration of the gospel.

“ Be convinced then that Christianity has a more
“ noble *inward witness* belonging to it than is derived
“ from ink and paper, from precise letters and syllables.
“ And though God, in his great wisdom and
“ goodness, saw it necessary that the New Testament
“ should be written, to preserve these holy doctrines
“ uncorrupted through all ages, and though he has been
“ pleased to be the invariable and authentic rule of our
“ faith and practice, and made it a glorious itstrument
“ of instructing ministers and leading men to salvation
“ in all these latter times; yet Christianity has a *secret*
“ *witness* in the hearts of believers, that *does not depend*
“ *on their knowledge and proof of the authority of the*
“ *scriptures*, nor of any of the controversies that in latter
“ ages have attended the several manuscript copies
“ and different readings and translations of the Bible.

“ Now this is of admirable use and importance in the
“ Christian life, upon several accounts. First, if we consider
“ how few poor unlearned Christians there are
“ who are capable of taking in the arguments which are
“ necessary to prove the divine authority of the sacred
“ writings; and how few, even among the learned, can
“ well adjust and determine many of the different readings
“ or different translations of particular passages in
“ scripture. Now a wise Christian does not build his
“ faith or hope merely upon any one or two single
“ texts, but upon the GENERAL SCOPE, sum and substance
“ of the gospel. By this he FEELS a *spiritual*

" *life* of peace and piety begun in him. And *here* lies " his EVIDENCE that CHRISTIANITY IS DIVINE, and " that these doctrines are from heaven, though a text " or two may be falsely written or wrong translated, and " though a whole book or two may be hard to be proved " authentic.

" The learned well know what need there is of turn" ing over the histories of antient times, of the tradi" tions and writings of the fathers, and all authors pious " and profane; what need of critical skill in the holy " languages and in antient manuscripts; what a wide " survey of various circumstances of fact, time, place, " style, diction, is necessary to confirm one or another " book or verse of the New Testament, and to answer " the doubts of the scrupulous, and the bold objections " of the infidel. Now how few of the common rank of " Christians, whose hearts are inlaid with *true faith* in " the Son of God, and with *real holiness*, have *leisure*, " books, instruction, advantages, and judgment sufficient " to make a thorough search into these matters, and to " determine, upon a just view of argument, that these " books were written by the sacred authors whose " names they bear, and that these authors were under " an immediate inspiration in writing them. What a " glorious advantage is it then to have such an INFAL" LIBLE TESTIMONY *to the truth of the gospel* wrought " and written in the heart by renewing grace, as does " not depend on this laborious, learned, and ARGUMEN" TATIVE EVIDENCE of the divine authority of the Bible, " or of any particular book or verse in it!

" Secondly, if we consider what bold assaults are " sometimes made upon the faith of the unlearned " Christian by the deists and unbelievers of our age, " by disputing against the authority of the scripture, " by ridiculing the strange narratives and sublime doc" trines of the Bible, by setting the seeming contradic-

" tions in a blasphemous light, and then demanding, " How can you prize or how can you believe that this " book is the word of God, or that the religion it teaches " is divine?' In such an hour of contest, how happy is " the Christian that can say, ' Though I am not able " to solve all the *difficulties* in the Bible, nor maintain " the sacred authority of it against the cavils of wit and " learning, yet I am *well assured* that the doctrines of " this book are sacred, and the authority of them divine; " for when I heard and received them, they changed " my nature, they subdued my sinful appetites, they " made a new creature of me, and raised me from death " to life; they made me LOVE GOD above all things, and " gave me the lively and well-grounded hope of *his* love. " Therefore I cannot doubt but that the CHIEF PRINCI- " PLES of this book are divine, though I cannot so well " prove that the very words and syllables of it are so " too; for it is the sense of scripture, and not the mere " letters of it, on which I build my hope. What if the " scripture should not be divine? What if this gospel " and the other epistles should not be written by inspi- " ration? What if these should be merely the words of " men, and not the very word of God?—Though I can- " not recollect all the arguments that prove Matthew, " Mark, and Luke to be divine historians, or Peter and " Paul to be inspired writers; yet the substance and " *chief sense* of these gospels and their epistles must " needs be divine; FOR IT HAS BEGUN THE SPIRITUAL " AND ETERNAL LIFE IN MY SOUL; and THIS IS MY " WITNESS, or rather the witness of the SPIRIT OF GOD " within us, that CHRIST IS THE SON OF GOD, the " SAVIOUR OF SINNERS, and the religion that I pro- " fess and practise is safe and divine.'

" And though there are many and sufficient argu- " ments drawn from criticism, history, and human " learning to prove the sacred authority of the Bible,

" and such as may give abundant satisfaction to an " honest inquirer, and full satisfaction that it is the " word of God; yet THIS IS THE CHIEF EVIDENCE that " the *greatest part of Christians* can ever attain of the " divine original of the holy scripture itself, as well as " the truth of the doctrines contained in it, namely, " *That they have found a holy and heavenly* CHANGE passed upon them, by reading and hearing the propositions, the histories, the precepts, the promises, and " the threatenings of this book; and thence they are " wont to infer, that the God of truth would not attend " a book, which was not agreeable to his mind, with " such glorious instances of his own POWER and GRACE.

" I have dwelt the longer on shewing that the inward " *witness* is such a witness to the truth of the Christian " religion as does not depend on the *exact truth of letters and syllables*, nor on the critical knowledge of the " copies of the Bible, nor on this old manuscript or the " other new translation, because every manuscript and " every translation has enough of the gospel to save " souls by it, and make a man a Christian; and because " I think this point of great importance in our age, " which has taken so many steps to heathenism and " infidelity; for this argument or EVIDENCE will defend " a Christian in the profession of the true religion, " though he may not have skill enough to defend his " Bible.

" Why do you believe in Jesus?" asks the unbeliever. If you have this answer ready at hand, 'I HAVE " FOUND THE EFFICACY AND POWER OF THE GOSPEL " IN MY HEART;' this will be sufficient to answer every " cavil.

" The words of St. Paul to the Corinthians have a " reference to our present subject. *Ye are manifestly* " *declared to be the epistle of Christ ministered by us;* " *written not with* INK *but with the* SPIRIT OF THE LIV-

" *ING*, *GOD; not in tables of stone, but in fleshly tables of* " *the heart**."

Thus far Dr. Watts, in his sermons on the *inward Witness to Christianity*, where the reader will find a great deal of truly evangelical instruction. For my own part, I cannot but think this good man approached as nearly to Christian perfection as any mortal ever did in this sublunary state; and therefore I consider him as a better interpreter of the Christian doctrines than the most learned critics, who proud of their reason and their learning, despise or neglect the very life and soul of Christianity, the living everlasting *gospel*, the supernatural operation of DIVINE GRACE. And be it ever remembered, that Dr. WATTS was a man who cultivated his reason with particular care, who studied the abstrusest sciences, and was as well qualified to become a verbal critic, or a logical disputant on the scriptures, as the most learned among the doctors of the Sorbonne, or the greatest proficients in polemical divinity.

SECTION XIV.

The Opinion of Dr. Lucas, *the celebrated Author of a Treatise on* HAPPINESS, *concerning the Evidence of Christianity arising from divine* Communication.

" THERE is," says Dr. Lucas, " no great " need of acquired learning in order to true illumina- " tion. Our Saviour did not exact of his disciples, as " a necessary preparation for his doctrine, the know- " ledge of tongues, the history of times or of nature; " logic, metaphysics, or the like. These indeed may " be serviceable to many excellent ends: they may be

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* 2 Cor. iii. 2, 3.

" great accomplishments of the mind, great ornaments, " and very engaging entertainments of life. They may " be, finally, very excellent and necessary instruments " of, or introductions to several professions and employ- " ments; but as to *religious* perfection and happiness, to " *these* they can never be indispensably necessary.

" A man may be excellently, habitually GOOD, with- " out more *languages* than *one;* he may be fully per- " suaded of those great truths, that will render him " master of his passions and independent of the world; " that will render him easy and useful in this life, and " glorious in another, though he be no logician nor me- " taphysician.

" The qualifications previously necessary to *illumina-* " *tion* are two or three MORAL ONES, implied in that " INFANT temper which our Saviour required in those " who would be his disciples,—humility, impartiality, " and a thirst and love of truth."

" There is a knowledge, which, like the summit of " Pisgah where Moses stood, shews us the land of Ca- " naan, but does not bring us to it.

" How does the power of darkness, at this moment, " prevail amidst the light of the gospel? Are men *igno-* " *rant?* No: but their knowledge is not *such* as it ought " to be; it is not the *light of life*.

" The understanding does not always determine the " will.

" Though every honest man be not able to discover " all the arguments on which his creed stands, he yet " may discover ENOUGH; and what is more, he may " have an INWARD, VITAL, SENSIBLE proof of them; " he may FEEL the power, the charms of holiness, *ex-* " *perience* its congruity and loveliness to the human " soul, so as that he shall have no doubts or *scruples*. " But besides this, there is a voice within, a divine " Teacher and Instructor.

" Extraordinary natural parts are not necessary to " illumination. The gospel takes no notice of them. " Such is the beauty of holiness, that it requires rather " a fine SENSIBILITY arising from purity of heart, than " quickness of intellectual apprehension, to render us " ENAMOURED of it."

A truth which involves the present and eternal happiness of human beings, cannot be placed in too great a variety of lights, or too repeatedly enforced. " He " that soweth to the *Spirit*," says St. Paul, " shall of " the Spirit reap life everlasting*." When such is the harvest, every benevolent mind must wish to urge mankind, in this their seed-time, to sow to the Spirit. What is so important cannot be inculcated by too frequent repetition. I therefore quote authors which occur to me in the course of my reflections on the subject, whose opinions, though similar, may add weight to doctrines already advanced. Such is the above from Dr. Lucas, a most excellent divine, never charged with the least tendency to blameable enthusiasm.

I wish my reader to pay particular attention to what he suggests on the INFANT TEMPER, required by our Lord in his followers. " Except," says Jesus Christ, " ye be converted, and become as *little children*, ye shall " not enter into the kingdom of God†."—" Verily I say " unto you, Whosoever shall not receive the kingdom " of God as a LITTLE CHILD, he shall not enter there" in‡."

The amiable dispositions of infants must therefore be produced in the heart, before the religion of Christ can be received into it. But are such dispositions best produced, or can they be produced at all, by subtle disputations, by cold argumentation, by bringing forward objections in order to display ingenuity in answers, laboured indeed and sagacious, but, after all, unsatisfactory to many, and unintelligible to more?

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* Galatians, vi. 8. † Mat. xviii. 3. ‡ Mark, x. 14.

Yet this mode of recommending Christianity is the only one approved by some persons of high authority; and there are those who would not venture to preach the doctrine of grace, the *teaching of God* and a *spiritual understanding*, lest they should be numbered with enthusiasts, and lose all chance of promotion and worldly esteem. This danger must be voluntarily incurred by all who would succeed in repelling the rapid advances of modern infidelity. Christianity flourished wonderfully while its genuine doctrines, the glad tidings of grace, were preached; and it has been gradually declining, ever since it has become fashionable, in order to discountenance fanaticism, to recommend mere heathen morality as the essence of Christianity, and to make use of no other arguments to prove the truth of it, but such as an ingenious man, without the smallest particle of religion in his heart, might produce. Professional advocates, furnished with human arguments only and external evidence, appear to the true Christian, as well as to the unbeliever, like lawyers pleading for a *fee*, on that side of the question which they know to be wrong, or at least are not convinced is right. It is indeed certain that a dull and plodding scholar may make a wonderful display of erudition in defence of Christianity, without feeling a lively sense of it himself, or communicating it to his readers. His materials supply the adversaries with arms for fresh attacks, and at the same time fail in building an impregnable rampart round the citadel which he undertakes to defend. There is usually some weak place at which the enemy enters; and, having once entered, he takes possession of the fortress, and uses the stores and ammunition against the very persons who collected them with so much labour.

Nothing of this kind can happen when recourse is had to the teaching of the Spirit. It overcomes the heart; it brings it to the lovely state of infantine innocence and simplicity; and renders him who, like St. Paul was a persecutor of it, a warm friend and advocate.

It is certain that the argumentative mode of addressing unbelievers, and a reliance on external evidence, has hitherto failed. Many of the most learned and able men of modern times, who were capable of understanding the historical, logical, and metaphysical defences of Christianity, have read them without conviction, and laughed at their laborious imbecillity.

It is time to try another mode: And all who are sincere Christians will favour the experiment; for they would rather see men converted to the true religion, though they should become fervent, and zealous even to a degree of harmless enthusiasm, than totally alienated from it, and enlisted under the partizans of infidelity.

If men of the world and men of *learning** will not interpose to prevent the divine energy, we shall see it produce its genuine effects in all their vigour and maturity, as well in the world of grace as of nature. A secret operation gives life and growth to the tree, and so will it to the human soul. "I am the *vine*, ye are "the branches," says our Saviour: the branches will soon wither and decay, if the sap flows not to them from the vine.

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* Nec *Philosophos* se ostentent: sed satagant fieri THEODIDACTI. GREG. ix. *Ep. ad Univ. Paris.*

SECTION XV.

Passages from a well-known Book of an anonymous Author, intitled Inward Testimony.

" REAL Christians find, that as soon as they " apply themselves to KNOW what is *comprehensible* in the " sacred scriptures, and to a sincere endeavour to DO " what is *practicable*, so soon a FAITH in its INCOMPREHENSIBLE doctrines is produced, and then is fulfilled, " that *he that doth the will of God shall know of the doctrines whether they be of God.*

" The DIVINE SPIRIT concurs with the outward revelation in changing a man's *sceptical* disposition, and " then he is *fixed:* otherwise he would be as ready as " ever to embrace the first *plausible* argument *against* " the gospel.

" We have some, who, by their mere *notional* knowledge of revelation, the *outward testimony* to Christianity, disbelieve the reality or necessity of any acquaintance with the *inward testimony*, by which the " DIVINE SPIRIT produces a serious spiritual frame, " fitting the soul to receive the sanctifying impressions " of an *outward* revelation. They think that reading " of sacred scripture, and forming from thence right " notions of Christianity, *in order to* TALK of it, with a " going the round of common duties, and a not being " guilty of common sins, is the *whole of the Christian* " religion, and all the meetness that is necessary for " heaven. A serious HEAVENLY FRAME, suitable to " the true notion of revelation, has no place in them; " they *ridicule* it in others, and name it affectation, " rather than any real part of CHRISTIANITY.

" An ingenious mind may argue for GOD against the " *atheist;* for CHRIST against the *Socinian;* and for the

" outward testimony of the SPIRIT of Christ against " the *Deist;* and he himself be no *real Christian:* but no " person can well display this inward testimony of Christ " in the soul, without the EXPERIENCE of it*."

SECTION XVI.

Dr. Townson's *Opinions on the Evidence which is in this Book recommended as superior to all other.*

" IF the word was enforced by miracles in the " times only of its early publication, it has the standing " support and EVIDENCE of another power, which is " *still as operative*, where we will allow it, as ever. This " is declared and promised in the following passage: " *Jesus answered them and said, My doctrine is not mine,* " *but his that sent me. If any man will do his will, he shall* " *know of the doctrine whether it be of God, or whether I* " *speak of myself.*

" The person who enters on the study of a science, " of which he has only a general idea, must receive " many things *at first* on the *authority* of his instructors. " And surely there is no one, who, by his life and works, " has such claim to trust and confidence in his words as " the Author and Finisher of our faith. If then we " really desire to know the certainty of his doctrine; if " we have the courage to sacrifice meaner pursuits to " the wisdom that is from above, and the felicity of attaining it; we *shall study the truth of his religion* as he " directs, by the PRACTICE OF ITS LAWS. And this

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* Jam hic videte magnum sacramentum, Fratres. Magisteria forinsecus adjutoria quædam sunt et admonitiones; CATHEDRAM IN COELO HABET QUI CORDA DOCET.

AUGUST. *Tr.* 3. *in* 1 *Joan.*

" method, he assures us, will yield us the repose and " comfort of *firm persuasion*. Continuing stedfast in " such a course of discipline, we shall not seek after " signs from heaven, nor ask to behold the blind receive " their sight, the lame walk, the deaf hear, or the dead " raised up. The healing efficacy and blessed influ- " ence of the gospel will sufficiently vouch for its truth " and excellence.

" The EVIDENCE which thus possesses the soul is not " liable to be impaired by time, as might an impression " once made on the senses; but will shine more and " more unto a perfect day. For the practice of reli- " gion, by *purifying* the *heart*, will raise and improve " the *understanding* to conceive more clearly and judge " more rightly of heavenly things and divine truths: " the view and contemplation of which will return upon " the heart the warmth of livelier hopes and more vigo- " rous incitements to obedience; and effectual obedience " will feel and *testify* that it is the finger of God.

" For is nature able, by its own efficiency, to clear the " eyes of the mind; to rectify the will; to regulate the " affections; to raise the soul to its noblest object, in " love and adoration of God; to employ it steadily in " its best and happiest exercise, justice and charity to " man; to detach its desires from the pleasures, profits, " and honours of the world; to exalt its views to hea- " venly things; to render the whole life godly, just, and " sober? He, who impartially examines his own moral " abilities by the pure and searching light of the gospel, " must discern their defects and weakness in every part; " and when he well considers the tenor and spirit of this " gospel, must acknowledge that he is not of himself " sufficient for the attainments to which it calls, and " conducts its faithful votary.

" What then is it that hath taken him by the hand, " and, leads him on in this rising path of virtue and

" holiness; that prevents his steps from sliding; or if " his foot hath slipped, raises him again; that keeps him " steady in the right way; or, if at any time he hath " wandered out of it, recalls him to it; that strengthens " him to resist temptations, or endure toils, and so continue patiently in well doing; that, as he advances, " opens to his faith a still brightening view of the heavenly Jerusalem, through the gloom which our earthly " state hangs upon death and futurity; and animates him " to live and walk by this faith?

" If these are exertions beyond the sphere of mere " human activity, the question, whence such improvement of soul and spirit and life proceeds, will admit of " an easy and clear answer. It is God who blesses our " earnest petitions that we may do his will, and our sincere endeavours to do it, with the GRACE OF HIS HOLY " SPIRIT; who worketh in us both to will and to do of his " good pleasure; and thus verifies and fulfils the promises, " made by Christ to those who ask in his name, of succour " and strength from on high. Christ therefore is his " beloved Son, by whom we are redeemed, and in whom " we are accepted. The religion which he hath taught " us, so worthy of God in the theory, and so favoured by " him in the practice of its laws, proves its heavenly " origin by the fruit it produces; and brings its divinity " home to the breast of the devout professor by EXPERIENCE of its power unto salvation.

" It is natural to conclude, that he who has this conviction of its certainty will be desirous of persuading " others to the belief and practice of it; and will be of " an apt and fit disposition to instruct them in it."

There are scarcely any *recent* divines, whose opinions ought to have more weight than those of Dr. Townson. He lived, as he wrote, according to the true gospel. He is universally esteemed by the most learned and judicious theologists of the present day; and his opinions alone carry with them sufficient authority to justify me fully in recommending that evidence of the gospel truth which arises from divine influence, consequent on obedience to its precepts. An orthodox life, I am convinced, is the best preparative to the entertainment of orthodox opinions; and I rejoice to find such men as Townson enforcing the doctrine, " that if any man will " do the will of Christ, he shall KNOW of the doctrine " whether it be of God." He does not refer us to systematical or philosophical works, but to the teaching of the Holy Ghost, for the attainment of this knowledge; a knowledge, compared to which all other is to man, condemned as he is shortly to die, but puerile amusement, a house of cards, a bubble blown up into the air, and displaying deceitful colours in a momentary sunshine.

SECTION XVII.

Dr. Doddridge *on the Doctrine of Divine Influence.*

" ANY degree of divine influence on the mind, " inclining it to *believe in Christ* and to practise virtue, " is called GRACE. All those who do indeed believe in " Christ, and in the main practise virtue, are to ascribe " it not merely or chiefly to their own wisdom and " goodness, but to the special operation of divine grace " upon their souls, as the original cause of it. None " can deny, that God has such an access to the minds of " men that he can work upon them in what manner he " pleases: and there is great reason to believe, that his " secret influence on the mind gives a turn to many of " the most important events relating to particular per-

" sons and societies*, as it is evident many of the public " revolutions, mentioned in the Old Testament, are " ascribed to this cause†. Though the mind of man " be not invincibly determined by motives, yet in mat-" ters of great importance it is not determined without " them: and it is reasonable to believe, that where a " person goes through those difficulties which attend " faith and obedience, he must have a very lively view " of the great engagements to them, and probably, upon " the whole, a more lively view than another, who, in " the same circumstances, in all other respects acts in " a different manner. Whatever instruments are made " use of as the means of making such powerful impres-" sions on the mind, the efficacy of them is to be ascribed " to the *continual agency* of the first cause. The preva-" lence of virtue and piety in the church is to be ascribed " to God, as the great original Author, even upon the " principles of *natural religion.* Good men in scripture, " who appear best to have understood the nature of God, " and his conduct towards men, and who wrote under " the influence and inspiration of his Spirit, frequently " offer up such petitions to God, as shew that they be-" lieved the reality and importance of his gracious agen-" cy upon the heart to promote piety and virtue‡. God " promises to produce such a change in the hearts of " those to whom the other valuable blessings of his word " are promised, as plainly implies that the alteration " made in their temper and character is to be looked " upon as his work||.

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[*] Prov. xxi. 1.

[†] Ezra, i. 1. Religion of Nature delineated, p. 105—107.

[‡] Psal. li. 10—12. xxxix. 4. xc. 12. cxix. 12. 18. 27. 33—37. 73. 80. 133. 1 Chron. xxix. 18. 19. Eph. i. 16, &c. Col. i. 9—11, &c. *sim.*

[||] Deut. xxx. 6. Psal. cx. 3. Jer. xxxi. 33. xxxi. 39, 40. Ezek. xi. 19, 20. xxxvi. 26, 27. Compare Heb. viii. 8—13.

“ The scripture expressly declares, in many places, that the work of *faith* in the soul is to be ascribed to God, and describes the *change* made in a man's heart, when it becomes truly religious, in such language as must lead the mind to some strength superior to our own by which it is effected*. The *increase* of Christians in faith and piety, is spoken of as the work of God; which must more strongly imply that the first beginnings of it are to be ascribed to him†. The scripture does expressly assert the absolute necessity of such divine influences on the mind, in order to faith and holiness, and speaks of God's giving them to one while he with-holds them from another, as the great reason of the difference to be found in the characters of different men in this important respect‡.

“ It appears probable from the light of nature, and certain from the word of God, that FAITH and repentance are ultimately to be ascribed to the work of special grace upon the hearts of men||. As to the man-

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* John, i. 13. iii. 3. 5, 6. Acts, xi. 18. xvi. 14. 2 Cor. iii. 3. Eph. i. 19, 20. ii. 1. 10. iv. 24. Phil. i. 29. Col. i. 11. 12. ii. 12, 13. *Vid.* James, i. 18. 2 Tim. ii. 25. To this catalogue we scruple not to add Eph. ii. 8. though some have objected that τȣτο cannot refer to ϖιςεως; since the like change of genders is often to be found in the New Testament; compare Acts, xxiv. 16. xxvi. 17. Phil. i. 28. 1 John, ii. 8. Gal. iii. 16. iv. 19. Matth. vi. *ult.* xxviii. 19. Rom. ii. 14. Elsner's Observ. vol. i. p. 128. Raphel. Observ. *ex* Herod. in Matth. xxviii. 19. Glassii Op. l. iii. Tract. ii. de pr. Can. xvi. p. 524—526.

† Psal. cxix. 32. Phil. i. 6. ii. 13. 1 Cor. vii. 25. iii, 7. iv. 7. xv. 10. 2 Cor. v. 5. Heb. xiii. 20, 21. 1 Pet. v. 10. Jude, ver. 24, 25.

‡ Deut. xxix. 4. Matth. xi. 25, 26. John, vi. 44, 45, 46. xii. 39, 40. Rom. ix. 18.—23.

|| Lime-street Lect. vol. ii. p. 242—245. Tillotson's Works, vol. ii. p. 80, 81. Limb. Theol. l. iv. c. 14. § 4, 21. Brandt's Hist. of the Ref. vol. ii. p. 75. Doddridge on Regen. Serm. vii.

"ner in which divine grace operates upon the mind, "considering how little it is we know of the nature and "and constitution of our own souls, and of the frame of "nature around us, it is no wonder that it should be unaccountable to us*. Perhaps it may often be, by impelling the animal spirits or nerves, in such a manner "as is proper to excite certain ideas in the mind with a "degree of vivacity, which they would not otherwise "have had: by this means various passions are excited; "but the great motives addressed to *gratitude* and *love* "seem generally, if not always, to operate upon the will "more powerfully than any other, which many divines "have therefore chosen to express by the phrase of *delectatio victrix*†."

SECTION XVIII.

The Opinions of Mr. Locke and Mr. Addison.

IT will be difficult to prove that any of the modern worshippers of their own reason possess understandings better illuminated than those of the great ornaments of our country, Locke and Addison; and they have left on record their opinion on the reality and

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p. 221—233. Jortin's Six Dissertations, No. 1. Warburton's Doctrine of Grace. Fost. Sermons, vol. ii. No. 5. præs. p. 104, 105.

[*] John, iii. 8.

[†] Compare Deut. xxx. 6. Psal. cxix. 16. 20. 32. 47, 48. 97. 103. Psal. xix. 10, 11. Rom. vii. 22. 1 John, iv. 18, 19. Rom. v. 5. Le Blanc's Thes. p. 527, § 53. Burn. Life of Roch. p. 43—51. Barclay's Apol. p. 148. Burnet on Art, p. 120. Whitby Comment. vol. ii. p. 289, 290. Scougal's Works, p. 6—10. Seed's Serm. vol. i. p. 291. Ridley on the Spirit, p. 210. King's Origin of Evil, p. 71. 376—380, fourth edition.

necessity of supernatural assistance. It is evident, I think, that Mr. Locke's understanding and temper were very little inclined to admit any thing fanatical. He appears to have weighed well, in the balance of reason, whatever he advanced; and therefore his testimony may be supposed to have authority on the minds of those who, in forming their religious principles, lay claim to pre-eminent RATIONALITY.

Mr. Addison is universally allowed to have united in himself the scholar, the philosopher, and the gentleman. His liberal and polished mind always appeared to me peculiarly formed for theological subjects, and he treats them in a most pleasing and persuasive manner. Let us hear both these great men on our present subject.

" To these I must," says Mr. Locke, " add one advantage more we have by Jesus Christ, and that is, " the promise of ASSISTANCE. If we do what we can, " he will give us his SPIRIT to *help* us to do what, and " how we should. It will be idle for us, who know not " how our own spirits move and act us, to ask in what " manner the Spirit of God shall work upon us. The " wisdom that accompanies that spirit knows better than " we how we are made, and how to work upon us. If " a wise man knows how to prevail on his child, to bring " him to what he desires, can we suspect that the spirit " and wisdom of God fail in it, though we perceive or " comprehend not the ways of his operation? Christ has " promised it, who is faithful and just, and we cannot " doubt of the performance. It is not requisite, on this " occasion, for the inhancing of this benefit, to enlarge " on the frailty of minds, and weakness of our constitutions; how liable to mistakes, how apt to go astray, " and how easily to be turned out of the paths of virtue. " If any one needs go beyond himself and the testimony " of his own conscience on this point; if he feels not his " own errors and passions always tempting him, and

" often prevailing against the strict rules of his duty, he " need but look abroad into any age of the world to be " convinced. To a man under the difficulties of his " nature, beset with temptations, and hedged in with " prevailing custom, it is no small encouragement to set " himself seriously on the courses of virtue and practice " of true religion, that he is from a sure hand and an " almighty arm promised assistance to support and " carry him through."

Let us hear also Mr. Addison, a lay divine of the first order.

" We who have this veil of flesh standing between " us and the world of spirits, must be content to know " that the Spirit of God is present with us, by the effects " which he produceth in us. Our outward senses are " too gross to apprehend him; we may however taste " and see how gracious he is, by his influence upon our " minds, by those virtuous thoughts which he awakens " in us, by those secret comforts and refreshments which " he conveys into our souls and by those ravishing joys " and inward satisfactions which are perpetually spring-" ing up and diffusing themselves among all the thoughts " of good men. *He is lodged in our very essence, and is* " *as a soul within the soul, to irradiate its understanding,* " *rectify its will, purify its passions and enliven all the* " *powers of man.* How happy therefore is an intellec-" tual being, who, by prayer and meditation, by virtue " and good works, opens this communication between God " and his own soul! Though the whole creation frowns " upon him, and all nature looks black about him, he " has his light and support within him, that are able to " cheer his mind, and bear him up in the midst of all " those horrors which encompass him. He knows that " his helper is at hand, and is always nearer to him than " any thing else can be, which is capable of annoying or " terrifying him. In the midst of calumny or contempt,

" he attends to that being who whispers better things " within his soul, and whom he looks upon as his defender, his glory, and the lifter-up of his head. In " his deepest solitude and retirement he knows that he " is in company with the greatest of Beings; and perceives within himself *such* REAL SENSATIONS *of his* " *presence*, as are more delightful than any thing that " can be met with in the conversation of his creatures. " Even in the hour of death he considers the pains of " his dissolution to be nothing else but the breaking " down of that partition which stands betwixt his soul " and the sight of that Being, who is always present " with him, and is about to manifest itself to him in " fulness of joy.

" If we would be thus happy, and thus sensible of " our Maker's presence, from the secret effects of his " mercy and goodness, we must keep such a watch over " all our thoughts, that, in the language of the scripture, *his soul may have pleasure in us*. We must take " care not to grieve his Holy Spirit, and endeavour to " make the meditations of our hearts always acceptable " in his sight, that he may delight thus to reside and " dwell in us. The light of nature could direct Seneca " to this doctrine in a very remarkable passage among " his epistles: ' *Sacer inest in nobis spiritus bonorum* " *malorumque custos et observator*, *et quemadmodum nos* " *illum tractamus*, *ita et ille nos*.' There is a Holy Spirit residing in us, who watches and observes both good " and evil men, and will treat us after the same manner " that we treat him. But I shall conclude this discourse " with those more emphatical words in divine revelation: " *If a man love me*, *he will keep my words; and* " *my Father will love him*, *and we will come and make our* " *abode with him*."

I cannot help observing, that after the sour and bitter potions administered by the metaphysical sceptres of recent times, the pages of the Spectator seem to afford the heart a delicious aliment or a balsamic medicine. If men did not too much resemble the prodigal in the gospel, they would surely rejoice to feed on manna at their father's table, rather than on husks with swine.

SECTION XIX.

The Opinion of Soame Jenyns *on the fundamental Principles of Christianity.*

" IF Christianity is to be learned out of the New " Testament, and *words have any meaning* affixed to " them, the fundamental principles of it are these:

" That mankind came into this world in a depraved " and fallen condition; that they are placed here for a " while, to give them an opportunity to work out their " salvation; that is, by a virtuous and pious life to purge " off that guilt and depravity, and recover their lost state " of happiness and innocence in a future life; that this " they are unable to perform without the GRACE AND " ASSISTANCE OF GOD; and that, after their best endea" vours, they cannot hope for pardon from their own " merits, but only from the merits of Christ, and the " atonement made for their transgressions by his suffer" ings and death. This is clearly the sum and substance " of the Christian dispensation; and so adverse is it to " all the principles of human *reason*, that if brought be" fore her tribunal, it must inevitably be condemned. If " we give no credit to its divine authority, any attempt " to reconcile them is useless, and, if we believe it, pre" sumptuous in the highest degree. To prove the REA" SONABLENESS of a revelation, is in fact to destroy it; " because a revelation implies information of something "which *reason cannot discover*, and therefore must be "different from its deductions, or it would be no revela- "tion."

The opinion of a professed wit and man of fashion may have weight with those who are prejudiced against professional divines. It has been doubted by many whether Mr. Jenyns was a sincere Christian. I am inclined to believe that he was sincere. As, in recommending Christianity, *it is right to become all things to all men, that we may save some*, his testimony is admitted in this place, though his lively manner of writing throws an air of levity on subjects, which, from their important nature, must always be considered as *grave* by all the partakers of mortality, who think justly and feel acutely.

SECTION XX.

The Opinion of Bishop Horsely *on the prevalent Neglect of teaching the* peculiar DOCTRINES *of Christianity, under the Idea that* Moral Duties *constitute the Whole or the better part of it. Among the* peculiar *Doctrines is evidently included that of Grace, which the Methodists inculcate, (as the Bishop intimates,)* not *erroneously.*

BISHOP Horsley has proved himself a mathematician and philosopher of the first rank, as well as a divine. All his works display singular vigour of intellect. He cannot be suspected of weak superstition or wild fanaticism. To the honour of Christianity, the editor of Newton, as well as Newton himself, is a firm supporter of its most mysterious doctrines. I desire the reader to weigh well the words of this able divine, as they were delivered in a charge to his clergy.

" A maxim has been introduced;" says he, " that the " laity, the more illiterate especially, have little concern " with the mysteries of revealed religion, provided they " be attentive to its duties; whence it hath seemed a safe " and certain conclusion, that it is more the office of a " Christian teacher to press the practice of religion upon " the consciences of his hearers, than to inculcate and " insert its doctrines.

" Again, a dread of the pernicious tendency of some " extravagant opinions, which persons, more to be " esteemed for the warmth of their piety than the soundness of their judgment, have grafted in modern times, " upon the doctrine of justification by faith, as it is stated " in the 11th, 12th, and 13th of the Articles of our " Church, (which, however, is no private tenet of the " church of England, but the common doctrine of all " the first reformers, not to say that it is the very *corner-" stone of the whole system of redemption*,) a dread of the " pernicious tendency of those extravagant opinions, " which seem to emancipate the believer from the authority of all moral law, hath given general credit to " another maxim; which I never hear without extreme " concern from the lips of a divine, either from the pulpit or in familiar conversation; namely, that practical " religion and morality are one and the same thing: that " moral duties constitute the whole, or by far the better " part, of practical Christianity.

" Both these maxims are erroneous. Both, so far " as they are received, have a pernicious influence over " the ministry of the word. The first most absurdly " separates practice from the motives of practice. The " second, adopting that separation, reduces practical " Christianity to heathen virtue; and the two, taken " together, have much contributed to divest our sermons

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"of the *genuine spirit and savour of Christianity*, and to "reduce them to mere moral essays: in which moral "duties are enforced, not, as indeed they might be to "good purpose, by scriptural motives, but by such arguments as no where appear to so much advantage as in "the writings of the heathen moralists, and are quite out "of their place in a pulpit. The rules delivered may "be observed to vary according to the temperament of "the teacher. But the system chiefly in request, with "those who seem the most in earnest in this strain of "preaching, is the strict but impracticable, unsocial, "sullen moral of the *Stoics*. Thus, under the influence "of these two pernicious maxims, it too often happens "that we lose sight of that which is our proper office, "to publish the word of reconciliation, to propound the "terms of peace and pardon to the penitent, and we "make no other use of the high commission that we "bear, than to come abroad one day in the seven, "dressed in solemn looks, and in the external garb of "holiness, to be the apes of Epictetus.

"The first of the two, which excludes the laity from "all concern with the doctrinal part of religion, and "directs the preacher to let the doctrine take its chance, "and to turn the whole attention of his hearers to practice, must tacitly assume for its foundation (for it can "stand upon no other foundation) this complex proposition: Not only that the practice of religious duties "is a far more excellent thing in the life of man, far "more ornamental of the Christian profession, than "any knowledge of the doctrine without the practice; "but, moreover, that men may be brought to the practice of religion without previous instruction in its doctrines; or in other words, that faith and practice are, "in their nature, separable things. Now the former "branch of this double assumption, that virtue is a more "excellent thing in human life than knowledge, is un-

" questionably true, and a truth of great importance, " which cannot be too frequently or too earnestly inculcated. But the second branch of the assumption, that " faith and practice are separable things, is a gross mistake, or rather a manifest contradiction. Practical " holiness is the end; faith is the means: and to suppose " faith and practice separable, is to suppose the end " attainable without the use of means. The direct contrary is the truth. The practice of religion will " always thrive, in proportion as its doctrines are generally understood and firmly received; and the practice will degenerate and decay, in proportion as the " doctrine is misunderstood or neglected. It is true, " therefore, that it is the great duty of a preacher of the " gospel to press the practice of its precepts upon the " consciences of men; but then it is equally true, that " it is his duty to enforce this practice in a particular " way; namely, by inculcating its doctrines. The motives which the revealed doctrines furnish, are the only " motives he has to do with, and the only motives by " which religious duty can be effectually enforced.

" I am aware, that it has been very much the fashion, " to suppose a great want of capacity in the common " people, to be carried any great length in religious " knowledge, more than in the abstruse sciences. That " the world and all things in it had a maker; that the " Maker of the world made man, and gave him the life " which he now enjoys; that he who first gave life, can " at any time restore it; that he can punish, in a future " life, crimes which he suffers to be committed with impunity in this; some of these first principles of religion " the vulgar, it is supposed, may be brought to comprehend. But the *peculiar doctrines* of revelation, the " trinity of persons in the undivided Godhead; the incarnation of the second person; the expiation of sin " by the Redeemer's sufferings and death; the efficacy

" of his intercession; THE MYSTERIOUS COMMERCE OF " THE BELIEVER'S SOUL WITH THE DIVINE SPIRIT; " these things are supposed to be far above their reach. " If this were really the case, the condition of man would " indeed be miserable, and the proffer of mercy, in the " gospel, little better than a mockery of their woe; for " the consequence would be, that the common people " could never be carried beyond the first principles of " what is called natural religion. Of the efficacy of " natural religion, as a rule of action, the world has had " the long experience of 1600 years. For so much was " the interval between the institution of the Mosaic " church, and the publication of the gospel. During " that interval, certainly, if not from an earlier period, " natural religion was left to try its powers on the " heathen world. The result of the experiment is, that " its powers are of no avail. Among the vulgar, natu- " ral religion never produced any effect at all; among " the learned, much of it is to be found in their writings, " little in their lives. But if this natural religion, a " thing of no practical efficacy, as experiment has de- " monstrated, be the utmost of religion which the com- " mon people can receive, then is our preaching vain, " Christ died in vain, and man must still perish. Blessed " be God! the case is far otherwise. As we have, on " the one side, experimental proof of the insignificance " of what is called natural religion; so, on the other, in " the success of the first preachers of Christianity we " have an experimental proof of the sufficiency of re- " vealed religion to those very ends in which natural " religion failed. In their success we have experimen- " tal proof that there is nothing in the great mystery of " godliness, which the vulgar, more than the learned, " want capacity to apprehend, since, upon the first " preaching of the gospel, the illiterate, the scorn of " pharisaical pride, who knew not the law, and were

" therefore deemed accursed, were the first to under-
" stand, and to embrace the Christian doctrine.****

" An OVER-ABUNDANT zeal to check the phrenzy of
" the METHODISTS, first introduced that unscriptural
" language which confounds religion and morality.****
" The great crime* and folly of the *Methodists* consists
" not so much in *heterodoxy*, as in fanaticism: not in
" PERVERSE DOCTRINE, but rather in a disorderly zeal
" for the propagation of the TRUTH.**** Reason, till
" she has been taught by the lively oracles of God,
" knows nothing of the *spiritual life*, and the food
" brought down from heaven for its sustenance."

The Bishop here intimates, that " our sermons are " often divested of the *genuine spirit* and *savour* of " Christianity." If so, it is no wonder that our churches are forsaken and our religion despised. It is a fact, to which I have frequently been an eye-witness, that spacious churches in London, capable of containing thousands, are almost empty, notwithstanding the preachers every where inculcate excellent morality. Wherever indeed there appears, what the common people call, an EVANGELICAL preacher, the churches are so crouded that it is difficult to gain admittance. The multitude hunger and thirst for the spiritual food; yet *evangelical* preaching is discouraged by many *in high places*, because it is said to savour of enthusiasm and to delude the vulgar*. But it is this preaching alone which will preserve Christianity among us, and cause it to be considered as any thing better than a state-engine for the depression of the people.

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* The phraseology and charge, in this place, we understand from a respectable source, is somewhat exceptionable; and that some judicious and candid readers have expressed their regret that so valuable a book, otherwise, should contain a sentiment so calculated to give displeasure to a numerous and respectable body of christians, who, as the author admits, are zealously engaged in " *the propagation of the* TRUTH"—and as a body of people, they consider the charge of fanaticism unjustly applied.

SECTION XXI.

The Church of England teaches the true Doctrine of Grace.

IN recommending to more general notice the doctrine of grace, I make no pretensions to a new discovery. It is obviously the doctrine of the Gospel; it is obviously the doctrine of the Church; it is fully acknowledged by all who sincerely use that form of prayer, which is established by the authority not only of those who composed it, but of those who ever since its composition, even to the present day, retain it in the divine service.

Bishop Gibson, who was certainly a zealous friend to the Church of England, has collected a number of passages from the liturgy, to shew that the public offices of the Church are duly regardful of the gifts and graces of the Holy Spirit.

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* Erasmus was a consummate judge of preaching and preachers. Let us hear him.

Doctos puto quotquot crediderunt EVANGELIO. *Cur enim indocti debeant appellari, qui, (ut nihil aliud,) e symbolo apostolorum didicerunt illam* ULTRAMUNDANAM PHILOSOPHIAM, *quam non Pythagoras aut Plato, sed ipse* Dei Filius *tradidit hominibus; qui a* Christo *docti sunt, quâ viâ ad quem felicitatis scopum tendere. Ubicunque est* VERA SANCTITAS, *ibi est* MAGNA PHILOSOPHIA *minimeque vulgaris eruditio. Sed tamen inter hos egregiè doctos excellunt, quibus peculiari* Spiritus *munificentiâ datum est, ut ad justitiam erudiant multos; quibus* Dominus *dedit* labia, *non in quibus illa gentium πειθως flexanima, sed in quibus ex* UNCTIONE Spiritus *diffusa est* GRATIA CŒLESTIS. Erasm. *Eccles.*

" In the daily service, we pray to God to grant us true " repentance and his Holy Spirit—to replenish the King " with the grace of his Holy Spirit—to endue the Royal " Family with his Holy Spirit—to send down upon our " Bishops and Curates, and all Congregations committed to their charge, the *healthful Spirit of his grace*— " that the Catholic Church may be guided and governed " by his *good Spirit*, and that the fellowship of the *Holy* " *Ghost* may be ever with us.

" In the Litany we pray that God will *illuminate* all " Bishops, Priests, and Deacons with the true knowledge and understanding of his Word—will endue us " with the *grace* of his Holy Spirit, and that we may all " bring forth the fruits of the Spirit.

" In the Collects we pray that God will grant us the " true circumcision of the Spirit, that our hearts and all " our members being mortified from all worldly and " carnal lusts, we may in all things obey his blessed " will—that God will send his Holy Ghost, and pour " into our hearts the most excellent gift of charity— " that we may ever obey the *godly motions of the Spirit* " in righteousness and true holiness—that by his holy " inspiration we may think those things that be good, " and by his merciful guiding may perform the same— " that God will not leave us comfortless, but send to us " his Holy Ghost to comfort us—that by his Spirit we " may have a right judgment in all things, and evermore rejoice in his holy comfort—that his Holy Spirit may in all things direct and rule our hearts—that " he will cleanse the thoughts of our hearts by the inspiration of his Holy Spirit.

" In the office for Confirmation, we pray for the persons to be confirmed, that God will strengthen them "with the Holy Ghost, the Comforter, and daily increase in them his manifold gifts of grace, the spirit of wisdom and understanding, the spirit of counsel and ghostly strength, the spirit of knowledge and true godliness—that he will fill them with the spirit of his holy fear—and that they may daily increase in his Holy Spirit more and more."

The articles of original sin, free-will and justification evince that the Church of England maintains the doctrine of light, sanctity, and life, deriveable from the operation of the Holy Ghost. And there is a curious passage in a book, written by Archbishop Cranmer and the Committee of Divines, entitled *Necessary Erudition for a Christian Man*, which fully declares, that "besides many other evils that came by the fall of man, the high power of man's reason and freedom of will were wounded and corrupted; and all men thereby brought into such blindness and infirmity, that they cannot eschew sin, *except they be illuminated* and made free by an *especial grace*, that is to say, by *a supernatural help* and *working of the Holy Ghost**."

There can be no doubt, in the mind of an impartial inquirer, that the church teaches the doctrine of supernatural influence in plain and strong terms; and that it derives it from the holy scriptures. "For it is by the Spirit of wisdom that our understandings are enlightened: it is by the Spirit that we are rooted and grounded in love, and that our souls are purified in obeying the truth; it is by the Spirit that we are called unto liberty; for where the spirit of the Lord is, there is liberty; in a word, it is by the Spirit that all our infirmities

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* This book was published by Henry VIII. 1543, and approved by the Lords Spiritual and Temporal and the Lower House of Parliament.

" are helped, and that we are strengthened with might " in the inner man*."

" Without me," says Christ, " ye can do nothing." Our blessed Saviour opened the understandings of his disciples, that they might understand the scriptures. The Lord opened the heart of Lydia, that she attended to the things that were spoken of Paul. The natural man receiveth not the things of the spirit of God; for they are foolishness unto him: neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned. That the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory, may give unto you the spirit of wisdom and revelation, in the knowledge of him, that ye may know what is the hope of his calling, and what the riches of the glory of his inheritance in the saints. For God, who commanded the light to shine out of darkness, hath shined in our hearts, to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ.—No man can say that Jesus is the Lord, but by the Holy Ghost.—For by grace ye are saved through faith; and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God†.

If there be meaning in words, these passages evince the reality and necessity of internal illumination from the great fountain of light. And what says the homily of the church? " In reading of God's word, he most " profiteth, not always that is most ready in turning of " the book, or in saying of it without the book, but he " that is most turned into it, that is, most inspired with " the Holy Ghost." In the same homily, a passage from Chrysostom is quoted to the following purport: " Man's human and worldly wisdom and science is not

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* Eph. i. 17. 1 Pet. 22. Gal. v. 13. 2 Cor. iii. 17. Rom. viii. 26. Ephes. iii. 16, 17.

† John, xv. 5. Acts, xvi. 14. Ephes. i. 17, 18. 1 Cor. xii. 3. Luke, xxiv. 45. 1 Cor. ii. 14. 2 Cor. iv. 6.

"needful to the understanding of scripture, but the revelation of the Holy Ghost, who, inspireth the *true meaning* unto them that with humility and diligence do seek therefore."

In the Ordination Office, the Bishop says to the candidates for priest's orders, "Ye cannot have a mind or will thereto of yourselves, for the will and ability is given of God alone. Therefore ye ought and have need to pray earnestly for the HOLY SPIRIT. You will continually pray to God the Father, by the mediation of our only Saviour Jesus Christ, for the heavenly assistance of the Holy Ghost."

A great number of citations might be brought to prove that the doctrine of grace or supernatural assistance is established by the church in exact conformity to the scriptures*; but it is not necessary to insist on a truth which is evident to every one who reads the Common-prayer book and the Bible.

SECTION XXII.

On the Means of obtaining the Evidence *of Christianity, afforded by the Holy Spirit.*

I NOW come to the most important part of my subject. I have produced, as I intended, the unexceptionable authority of great and good men, most eminent divines, to countenance and support me in recommending, above all other evidence, the evidence of the Holy Ghost, to the truth of Christianity. After the suffrages of such men in favour of this sublime doctrine, no man can justly call it heterodox or improperly enthusiastical. I could indeed cite many other most respectable authorities; but I have already exceeded the just limits of quotation. It now remains to point out the means of obtaining this evidence.

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* It never can be consistent with the character of an *honest man* solemnly to subscribe to the doctrines of grace, seriously to pray in the church for divine influence, and then to teach and preach against the whole doctrine.

FAITH IS THE GIFT OF GOD*. To the Giver only it belongs to prescribe the means of obtaining his bounty. He has prescribed the WRITTEN WORD and PRAYER. *Faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the* WORD OF GOD†. But the whole tenor of the Gospel proves, that the WRITTEN WORD has not *efficacy* of itself to convince our understandings, nor reform our hearts; to produce either faith in God or repentance from dead works, *without the aid of the Holy Ghost.*

Now the aid of the Holy Ghost is promised to PRAYER: "If ye," says our Saviour, "being evil, know "how to give good gifts unto your children, how much "more shall God give the HOLY SPIRIT to them that "ask him?"

The Holy Spirit, it appears from this passage, is the best gift, which the best, wisest and most powerful of Beings, can bestow, and he has promised it those who ask it with faith and humility. An easy condition of obtaining the greatest *comfort* of which the heart of man is capable, together with full evidence of the *truth of Christianity.*

But do the inquirers into the truth of Christianity seek its evidence in this manner? Do they fall on their knees, and lift up their hearts in supplication? It appears rather that they trust to their own *power*, than to the *power* of God. They take down their folios, they have recourse to their logic, their metaphysics, nay even their *mathe-*

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* Eph. ii. 8.

† Rom. x. 7.

*matics**, and examine the mere historical and external evidence with the eyes of criticism and heathen philosophy. The *unbelievers*, on the other hand, do the same; and, as far as wit and subtle reasoning goes, there are many who think that a Tindal and a Collins were more than equal to a Clarke and a Coneybeare. There is no doubt but that infidelity is diffused by theological *controversy*, whenever the illumination of the Spirit, the SANCTITY of the Gospel, is entirely laid aside, and the whole cause left to the decision of human wit and invention.

He that would be a Christian indeed, and not merely a disputant or talker about Christianity, must seek better evidence than man, short-sighted as he is with the most improved sagacity, ignorant as he is with the deepest learning, can by any means afford. He must, in the words of the Psalmist†, "*open his mouth and draw* "*in the Spirit.*" The Holy Ghost will give him the SPIRIT OF SUPPLICATION‡, which will breathe out in prayer, and inhale from him who first inspired the *divine particle*||, fresh supplies of grace. He must *continue instant in prayer*. This will preserve his mind in a state fit to receive the Holy Visitant from on high, who brings with him balsam for the heart, and light for the understanding. The result will be full evidence of Christianity, full confidence in Jesus Christ, joy and peace on earth, and a lively hope of salvation. What a sunshine must a mind in such a state enjoy: how different from the gloominess of the sceptic or unbeliever; how superior to the coldness of the mere disputant in scholastic or sophistical divinity!

With respect to the *efficacy* of PRAYER in bringing down the assistance, the illumination of the Holy Ghost,

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* See Ditton, Baxter, Huet, and many others who undertake to *demonstrate*, almost *geometrically*, the truth of the gospel.

† Psal. cxix. 131.

‡ Zach. xii. 10.

|| Divinæ particulam auræ. HOR.

not merely in teaching doctrinal notions, but in the actual conduct of life, let us hear the declaration of Lord Chief Justice Hale, whose example I select, because he was a layman, a man deeply conversant in the business of the world, a great lawyer, and therefore may contribute to prove, that they who value themselves on their worldly sagacity, and frequently consider the affairs of religion as trifles, compared with the contests for property and the concerns of jurisprudence, need not, in the most active life and most exalted stations, be ashamed of the Gospel of Christ.

"I can call," says he, "my own EXPERIENCE to witness, that even in the external actions, occurrences and incidents of my whole life, I was never disappointed of the *best guidance* and *direction*, when in humility, and a sense of deficiency, and diffidence of my own ability to direct myself, or to grapple with the difficulties of my life, I have *implored* the *secret guidance* of the divine Wisdom and Providence."

SECTION XXIII.

Temperance necessary to the Reception and Continuance of the Holy Spirit in the Heart, and consequently to the Evidence of Christianity afforded by Divine Illumination.

THE Apostle says, *Be not drunk with wine, wherein is excess; but be filled with the* SPIRIT[*]. The word *ασωτια* in the original, here rendered *excess*, corresponds with the Latin *prodigalitas*, which, in the Roman law, characterised the spendthrift and debauchee, incapable, from his vices, of managing his own affairs, and therefore placed by the prætor under the guardianship of trustees, without whose concurrence he could perform no legal act*. He was considered as an infant and an idiot. The words of the Apostle may then be thus paraphrased. “ Be not intemperate in wine, because intem-“ perance will destroy your reason, and degrade you to “ a state of infantine *imbecility*, without infantine *inno-“ cence*; but be filled with the SPIRIT; that is, let your “ reason be exalted, purified, clarified to the highest “ state by the co-operation of the divine reason, which “ cannot be, if you destroy the natural faculties which “ God has given you, by drunkenness and gluttony.”

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[*] Eph. v. 18.

I think it evident, from this passage, as well as from the conclusion of reason, that all excess tends to exclude the radiance of grace. The mental eye is weakened by it, and cannot bear the celestial lustre†.

That great master of reasoning, Aristotle, maintained that *pleasures* are corruptive of *principles* (*φθαρτικαι των αρχων*); and many of the antients were of opinion, that vice disqualified for philosophical pursuits, where the object was merely terrestrial and human, by raising a thick cloud round the understanding, which the rays of truth could not penetrate. It was for this reason that one of them maintained that “ *juvenis non est idoneus “ moralis philosophiæ auditor*;” that though youth is most in want of moral instruction, yet, from the violence of its passions, and its usual immersion in sensuality, it was the least qualified to *comprehend*, he does not say to adopt or follow, but even to *understand*, the doctrines of moral philosophy.

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* See Dr. Powel's Sermon on the text.

† *Ωσπερ οφθαλμω λημωντι, ϗ ου κεκαθαρμενω, τα σφοδρα φωτεινα ιδειν ουκ οιοντε· ουτω ϗ τη ψυχη μη την αρετην κεκτημενη, το της αληθειας ενοπτρισασθαι καλλος.* As it is impossible for an eye, labouring under a malady which causes a defluction, to see clearly any very bright and brilliant object, till the impurity is removed; so it is for the mind, unpossessed of virtue, to reflect the beautiful image of truth. *Hierocles, in Præf. ad Pythag.*

One of our own philosophers[*], who in many respects equalled the antients, justly observes, "That anger, impatience, admiration of persons, or a pusillanimous "over-estimation of them, desire of victory more than "of truth, too close an attention to the things of this "world, as riches, power, dignities, IMMERSION OF THE "MIND INTO THE BODY, and *the slaking of that noble and* "*divine fire*[†] of the soul by intemperance and luxury; "all these are very great enemies to all manner of know-"ledge, as well natural as divine."

I therefore earnestly recommend it to every serious man, who wishes to be convinced of Christianity, to consider it in the *morning*[‡], before either the cares of the world, or the fumes of that intemperance[||] which conviviality sometimes occasions, blunt the feelings of the heart, and spreads a film over the visual nerve of the mental eye[**].

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[*] Dr. Henry More. [†] *Igneus ille vigor.*

[‡] Those that seek me *early* (*mane*) shall find me. Prov. viii.

[||] *Si præceptor*, HOMO, *gravatur* homini *disciplinam humanam committere, puta dialecticen aut arithmeticen, somnolento, oscitanti, aut* crapula *gravato; quanto magis* SAPIENTIA CŒLESTIS *dedignabitur loqui voluptatum hujus mundi amore temulentis, cœlestium rerum neglectu, nauseantibus?* ERASMUS.

[**] *Verum hæc* impransus. HOR.

SECTION XXIV.

On improving AFFLICTIONS *duly as a Means of Grace and Belief in the Gospel.*

A CELEBRATED divine[*], on his recovery from a severe fit of sickness, is reported to have said, "I have learned, under this sickness, to KNOW SIN AND "GOD." He had studied divinity, during many years, with great attention; he had prayed and preached with great ardour; yet he acknowledges, that till the affliction of sickness visited him, he was unacquainted with those important subjects, SIN AND GOD; subjects which he had so frequently considered in private, and discoursed upon before an admiring audience.

It is good for me that I have been afflicted, said one, who had sinned egregiously in his prosperous days, and who was rendered wise by affliction.

Afflictions, if suffered to have their perfect work, will certainly become the means of grace, cause belief in the consolatory gospel, and ultimately lead to salvation. The wandering mind returns, like the prodigal son, when under the pressure of distress, to the bosom of its father. The kind father goes forth to meet it on its return, and the interview happily terminates in perfect love and reconciliation.

More have been convinced of the truth of Christianity by a severe illness, a great loss, a disappointment[†], or the death of one whom the soul loved, than by all the *defences*, proofs, and *apologies* which have ever been produced in the most celebrated schools of theology. The heart was opened, and rendered soft and susceptible by sorrow, and the dew of divine grace enabled to find its way to the latent seeds of Christian virtue.

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[*] Oecolampadius.

[†] *Le moment de la* GRACE, *c'est une humiliation qui Dieu vous envoie, et qui vous* eloigne du monde, *parceque vous n'y pouvez plus paroitre avec honneur. C'est la disgrace d'un maitre a qui une lache complaisance vous faisoit en mille rencontres sacrifier les interets de votre conscience; le changement d'un ami dont le commerce trop frequent vous entrainoit dans le vice & vous y entretenoit. C'est* une perte

Such being the beneficial effect of afflictions, it is much to be lamented, that many will not suffer them to operate favourably on their dispositions, and thus counteract, by the good they may ultimately produce, the pain which they immediately inflict. They fly from solitude, they banish reflection. They drink the cup of intoxication, or seek the no less inebriating draft of dissipating pleasure. Thus they lose one of the most favourable opportunities of receiving those divine impressions which would give them COMFORT under their afflictions, such as the world cannot give; and afford them such conviction as would render them Christians indeed, and lead to all those beneficial consequences of faith, which are plainly represented in the scripture.

SECTION XXV.

On Devotion—a Means, as well as an Effect, of Grace—no sincere Religion can subsist without it.

MANY theologists, who have written with the acuteness of an Aristotle, and the acrimony of a Juvenal, against all sorts of infidels and heretics, in defence of Christianity, seem to have forgotten one very mate-

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de biens, une maladie, un chagrin domestique, *ou* etranger; *ce sont des* souffrances; *tout*, HORS DIEU, *devient* AMER; *on ne trouve plus de* consolation *que dans* lui; *& rebute des choses humaines, on commence a* GOUTER LES CHOSES DU CIEL. BRETONNEAU.

rial part of religion—that which consists of devotional sentiment, and the natural fervours of a sincere piety. Some of them seem to reprobate, and hold them in abhorrence. They inveigh against them as enthusiasm; they laugh at them as the cant of hypocrisy. Such men have the coldness of Bishop Butler, without the ingenuity; the contentious spirit of Dr. Bentley, without the wit or erudition.

True religion cannot exist without a considerable degree of devotion. On what is true religion founded but on LOVE—the love of God, and the love of our neighbour? And with respect to the love of God, what says our Saviour? Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thine heart, with all thy soul, and with all thy mind, and with all thy strength. No language can more expressly and emphatically describe the ardour of devotion. Out of the heart the mouth speaketh. If the heart feels the love of God, in the degree which our Saviour requires, the language of prayer and thanksgiving will be always glowing, and, on extraordinary occasions, even rapturous.

The *effectual FERVENT prayer of a righteous man availeth much:* if it be not *fervent*, it cannot be *sincere*, and therefore cannot be expected to avail. Love must add wings to prayer, to waft it to the throne of grace.

" Man has a principle of love implanted in his nature, " a *magnetism* of passion*," by which he constantly attaches himself to that which appears to him good and beautiful; and what so good, what so beautiful, as the archetype and model of all excellence? Shall he conceive the image, and not be charmed with its loveliness?

Worship or adoration implies lively affection. If it be cold, it is a mere mockery, a formal compliance with customs for the sake of decency. It is a lip-service, of which knaves, hypocrites, and infidels are capable, and which they render, for the sake of temporal advantage.

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* Norris.

Will any man condemn the ardour which the scriptures themselves exhibit? Must they not be allowed to afford a model for imitation? And are they written in the cold, dull style of an academical professor, lecturing in the schools of divinity? No; they are written in warm, animated, metaphorical, and poetical language; not with the precision of the schoolmen; not with the dryness of system-makers; but with florid, rhetorical impassioned appeals to the feelings and imagination. What are PSALMS, but the ebullitions of passion, sorrow, joy, love, and gratitude?

The truth is, that the most important subject which can be considered by man must, if considered with seriousness and sincerity, excite a warm interest. The fire of devotion may not, indeed, be equably supported, because such equability is not consistent with the constitution of human nature; but it will, for the most part, burn with a clear and steady flame, and will certainly, at no time, and in no circumstances, be utterly extinguished.

Where the heart is deeply interested, there will be eagerness and agitation. Suppose a man, who speaks, in the church, of the Holy Ghost, and other most important religious subjects, with perfect *sang froid*, repairing to the Stock-exchange, and just going to make a purchase. The price fluctuates. Observe how he listens to his broker's reports. His cheeks redden, and his eyes sparkle. Here he is in earnest. Nature betrays his emotion. It is not uncharitable to conclude that his heart is literally with his treasure; and that with respect to the riches of divine grace, he values them little; and, like Gallio, *careth for none of these things*. View him again, at a great man's levee, and see with what awe he eyes a patron. His attention approaches to adoration. He is tremblingly solicitous to please, and would undergo any painful restraint, rather than give the slightest offence. The world will not condemn, but applaud his anxiety; yet if he is earnest and fervent, when his interest is infinitely greater, in securing the tranquillity of his mind, under all the changes and chances of life, he is despised as an enthusiast, a bigot, a fool, or a madman.

A man of sense and true Goodness will certainly take care not to make an ostentation of his devotional feelings; but at the same time he will beware of suppressing, in his endeavour to moderate and conceal them.

He will never forget, that the same sun which emits light, gives, at the same time, a genial heat, that enlivens and cherishes all nature.

SECTION XXVI.

On Divine Attraction.

SHALL we believe our Saviour himself, or some poor mortal, who has learned a little Greek, Latin, or Hebrew, and upon the strength of his scanty knowledge of those languages, and a little verbal criticism, picked up in the schools of an university, assumes the pen of a Controversialist, and denies the evident meaning of words plainly and emphatically spoken by Jesus Christ? Our Saviour says, in language particularly direct, "No "man can come unto me, except the Father, which hath "sent me, DRAW HIM."

Faustus Regiensis, Wolzogenius, Brenius, Slichtingius, Sykes, Whitby, Clarke, and many others, endeavour to explain away the meaning of the word DRAW, (ἑλκυση,) because they have taken a side in the polemics of Theology, against the doctrine of Divine Grace.

But what have we to do with Faustus, Wolzogenius, Slichtingius, and the rest, when we have before us the words of JESUS CHRIST? By them it appears that there is an ATTRACTION in the spiritual world, as well as the natural; and that the Spirit of God, a benign philanthropic Spirit, unites itself to the soul of man, and communicates to it comfort, sanctity, and illumination.

Men do not controvert the received systems of natural philosophy. They believe in the *attraction* of gravitation, cohesion, magnetism, and electricity. But in this there is no *visible* agency, no *sensible* efflux, influx, or impulse. Yet they believe it, and certainly with reason; but why should they think that God acts thus on *matter*, comparatively vile, and leaves MIND uninfluenced? *Mind*, that pure, etherial essence, which must be said to approach in its nature to Divinity, (if man can conceive any thing of Divine,) and which has an inborn tendency to assimilate with its like.

God, we are told in scripture, is love. But love always attaches itself to its object. It is not compatible with love to be selfish and solitary. It delights in assimilation. The spirit of that God who is love, still unites itself with man, for whom it has already shewn so much affectionate regard, in the creation and redemption. It could not be consistent with the love and mercy of God to man, to leave him entirely, for ages, without any intercourse, any light, any communication, but a *written* WORD, in a language unknown, unread by many, and which, without Divine interposition, might be corrupted by the wickedness of man, or lost by his negligence. God's Spirit, acting upon the soul of man, at this hour and forever, is a LIVING, ENERGETIC AND EVERLASTING GOSPEL. The promise of God's assistance by his Spirit, (as St. Peter assured the first converts to Christianity,) was unto them, and unto their children, and to all that WERE AFAR OFF*, their successors to the remotest ages, *even to as many as the Lord their God should call.*

Man must be ATTRACTED to God by the spirit of love in the Divine nature, or else he ceases to be in the Christian system; and what may be the consequence to the soul in its aberration, is known only to him who knoweth all things. But surely every thinking mortal will gladly follow the Divine attraction, since it gradually draws him from this low vale, where sin and sorrow abound, up to the realms of bliss eternal; and affords him, during his earthly pilgrimage, the sweetest solace.

The human soul assimilating with the Divine, is the drop of water gravitating to the ocean, from which it was originally separated; and cohering with it as soon as it comes within the sphere of its attraction; it is the child clinging to the bosom of its parent; it is the wandering weary exile hastening with joy to his native home. Let us endeavour to cherish an inclination for re-union; let us follow all the known means of accomplishing it, and it will be finally and completely effected by the Holy Ghost, the spirit of love†.

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* Acts, ii. 39.

† Let us hear a Heathen philosopher speak on the union between God and good men.

Inter bonos viros ac Deum, amicitia est, conciliante virtute; amicitiam dico? etiam necessitudo et similitudo SENECA.

SECTION XXVII.

On the Difficulties of the Scripture.

In his solis literis et quod non assequor, tamen adoro.
ERASMUS.

IF there is any thing in human affairs to be approached with awe, and viewed with veneration, it is the WRITTEN WORD of revelation. Acknowledged sanctity and long duration combine to throw an air of divinity around it. It is worthy to be kept in the holy of holies. But I cannot agree with those zealous votaries who pretend either that there are no difficulties in it, or that they are all removable by the light of learning. I confess that criticism has removed many difficulties; but I am convinced that many still remain, which, I fear, will never give way to human sagacity. There they must remain, with all the majesty of clouds and darkness around them, till the sun of righteousness shall appear in his full glory.

But shall difficulties cause disbelief? Are there then no difficulties in nature, as well as in the words of grace? I cannot step into the garden or the meadow; I cannot cast my eyes to the horizon, without encountering difficulties. Yet I believe the existence of the things I see there, and I am led from the observation of general good, mixed with partial evil, to conclude, that verily there is a God. I conclude in the same manner, from what I *do* understand and *know* to be good in the gospel, that verily Jesus is the Christ; and that the parts of the gospel which I do not comprehend, are good, because those which I am able to understand are so beyond all doubt and comparison.

All that is necessary to my happiness in the gospel is sufficiently clear. I learn there that the HOLY GHOST is vouchsafed to me and to all men, now and till time shall be no more. This I consider as the LIVING GOSPEL. This supplies all defects, if any there should be, in the written word; and the dark and unintelligible parts of the gospel, surrounded by celestial radiance, become like spots in the sun, which neither deform its beauty, nor diminish its lustre. I am not therefore offended by them; I bow to them with reverence, as to sacred things upon the altar, covered with a veil from the eyes of mortal or profane intrusion. It is enough that I have learned, in the gospel, many moral truths; and this one great truth, that *God Almighty*, at *this moment*, pours an EMANATION of himself into the souls of all who seek the glorious gift by fervent prayer, and endeavour to retain it by obedience to his will. It is enough: why need I perplex my understanding with searching into those *secret things which belong unto the Lord;* or acquire a minute, cavilling habit, which never can discover any thing of more importance than that which I already know; but which, if indulged presumptuously, may lead me to scepticism, and terminate in infidelity? Some parts of the holy volume are sealed: I will not attempt to burst it open; or vainly conjecture what these parts conceal. I will wait with patience and humility for God's good time. In the mean time I will *rejoice;* and my flesh shall rest in hope; because I have been admitted to inspect the book, and have learned that the SPIRIT still attends the *written word*, ministering at this hour, and illuminating, with the lamp of Heaven, whatever darkness overshadows the path of life.

This persuasion adds new glory to the *written* gospel. It throws a heavenly lustre over the page. It is not left *alone* to effect the great purpose of men's recovery; so that whatever difficulties or defects it may be allowed to retain, by the wise providence of God, the difficulties will be removed, and the defects supplied, so far as to accomplish the *great end*, by the operation of the Holy Ghost, which accompanies it in its progress down the stream of time, like the pillar of fire, attending the children of Israel*.

SECTION XXVIII.

The OMNIPRESENCE *of God a Doctrine universally allowed; but how is God every where present but by his Spirit, which is the* HOLY GHOST.

> Ουδεν Θεων κενον.
> Nothing is without Deity. MARC ANTONIN.

THEY who maintain, if there be any such, that God having, about *eighteen hundred* years ago, signified his will to mankind, has ever since that time withdrawn his agency from the human mind, do, in effect, deny the *omnipresence*, and with it the omniscience, providence, and goodness of the Deity. But what say the scriptures? HE IS NOT FAR FROM EVERY ONE OF US; FOR IN HIM WE LIVE, AND MOVE, AND HAVE OUR BEING*.

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* Οσοι υιοι εισι του φωτος ϗ της διακονιας της καινης διαθηκης εν τω πνειματι αγὶω, ΘΕΟΔΙΔΑΚΤΟΙ ΕΙΣΙΝ· αυτη γαρ η χαρις επιγραφει εν ταις καρδιαις αυτων τους νομους του πνευματος· ουκ οφειλουσιν ουν εις τας γραφας μονον τας δια μελανος γεγραμμενας πληροφορεισθαι, αλλα ϗ εις τας πλακας της καρδιας η χαρις του Θεου εγγρα φειτους νομους του πνευματος ϗ τα επουρανια μυϛηρια.—As many as are the sons of the light, and of the ministration of the New Testament in the holy Spirit, are *taught of God;* for grace itself inscribes upon their hearts the laws of the Spirit. They are not therefore indebted to the SCRIPTURES ONLY, the word written with INK, for their Christian perfection; but the grace of God writes upon the tablet of their hearts the laws of the Spirit, and the mysteries of Heaven.

MACARIUS in Homil. 15.

But is it to be believed, that when he is thus *intimately* present with us, he either cannot, or will not, influence our sentiments? Why is he thus present? or why should he confine his agency over us to a LITTLE BOOK, in a foreign and dead language, which many never see at all, which more cannot read, and which few can perfectly understand; and concerning the literal meaning of the most important DOCTRINAL parts of which, the most learned and judicious are to this hour divided in opinion?

The heathens † had more enlarged and worthier ideas of the divine nature. They indeed believed in *supernatural agency* on the mind of man; though they disgraced their belief by the absurdities of polytheism. Every part of the universe was peopled by them, with supernatural agents, and the most distinguished among them believed their virtuous sentiments *inspired*, and their good actions *directed* by a tutelar deity. I dwell not upon the instance of Socrates's Demon ‡; and I only mention the topic, to prove that the doctrine is not likely to be very UNREASONABLE, since it was maintained by men who are acknowledged to have been singularly endowed with the rational faculty.

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* Acts, xvii. 27.

† *Ipse* Deus HUMANO GENERI *ministrat; ubique et omnibus præsto est.*—God himself administers to the human race; he is present every where, and to every man. SENECA EPIST.

Quocunque te flexeris, ibi illum videbis occurrentem tibi. Nihil ab illo vacat. Opus suum ipse implet.—Whichever way you turn, you will meet God. Nothing is without him. He fills his own work completely. SENEC. DE BENEFIC. Lib. 4. Cap. 8.

‡ It is worth while, however, to insert the following fine passage from Plato, in which Socrates asserts the necessity of *supernatural agency*, in removing a dark CLOUD from the human mind, previously to its being able to learn how to regulate conduct, either towards gods or men. Reason, till this dark cloud should be removed by divine Providence, he thought incapable of discovering either moral or divine truth with certainty.

The omnipotence, omnipresence, and omniscience of God were strenuously maintained, not only by the wisest of the heathens, but the most learned and rational of christian divines; among whom was Dr. Samuel Clarke, a man by constitution and studies as far removed from enthusiasm, as it is possible to conceive. But the *omnipresence* of God being allowed as a true doctrine, it will not be difficult to believe his agency on the human mind by supernatural impression. The difficulty would be to believe that the divine Spirit could be PRESENT always

S. ’Αναγκαῖον οὖν ἐστι περιμένειν ἕως ἂν τις μάθῃ ὡς δεῖ πρὸς θεοὺς καὶ πρὸς ἀνθρώπους διακεῖσθαι. Α. Πότε οὖν παρέσται ὁ χρόνος οὗτος, ὦ Σώκρατες; καὶ τις ὁ παιδεύσων;—ΣΩΚΡ. Οὗτός ἐστιν ᾧ μέλει περὶ σοῦ. ἀλλὰ δοκεῖ μοι, ὥσπερ τῷ Διομήδει φησὶ τὴν ’Αθηνᾶν Ὅμηρος ἀπὸ τῶν ὀφθαλμῶν ἀφελεῖν τὴν ’ΑΚΛῪΝ,

’Οφῤ εὖ γιγνώσκοι ἡμὲν θεὸν ἠδὲ καὶ ἄνδρα,

οὕτω καὶ σοῦ δεῖν ἀπὸ τῆς ψυχῆς πρῶτον ἀφελόντα τὴν ’ΑΚΛῪΝ, ἣ νῦν παροῦσα τυγχάνει, τηνικαῦτ’ ἤδη προσφέρειν δἰ ὧν μέλλεις γνώσεσθαι ἡμὲν “ κακὸν ηδὲ καὶ ἐσθλὸν·” νῦν μὲν γὰρ ουκ εν μοι δοκῆς δυνηθεῖναι. Platonis Alcibiades II. *prope Finem.—(Socrates and Alcibiades discourse.)* S. It is necessary then to wait till one is informed how one ought to behave, both in *religious* and *social* duties, to God and to men.—A. O Socrates, when will that time come, and who shall teach me?—S. EVEN HE WHO CARETH FOR YOU; but it appears to me, as Homer represents Minerva removing a dark cloud from the eyes of Diomed, that he might distinguish gods from men in the battle, so he who CARETH FOR YOU must first remove the dark cloud from your mind, which now hangs over it, and then you will use those means by which you may know “ the *good from ill*,” which, in your present state, you seem to me *unable* to distinguish.

The philosopher seems to have seen the necessity of divine revelation, and to have predicted the illumination of the Spirit of God.

and every where with us, and yet never act upon us, but leave the moral world, after the writing of the New Testament, to depend on the fidelity of *translations*, the interpretations of fallible men, the preaching and teaching of scholars, deriving all they know from *dictionaries*, and differing continually even on such doctrines as constitute the very corner-stones of the whole fabric.

The doctrine of God's total inaction, in the moral and intellectual world, is irreligious and unphilosophical. The wisest heathens exploded it. Fortunately it is refuted in the strongest language of scripture. For *after* our Saviour's ascension, the Holy Spirit was expressly promised, and the MINISTRATION of the Spirit, co-operating on the heart of man with the written word, is to continue its energy, as it does at this hour, to the end of time.

The spirit of God is every where present, like the air which we inhale. It is no less necessary to intellectual life, than the air to animal. There is a remarkable passage, apposite to the present subject, in the meditations of Antoninus, which I shall give in the translation of Collier, and as it is quoted by Delany.

" Let your soul," says the philosopher, " receive the " Deity, as your blood does the air; for the influences " of the one are no less vital than the other. This cor- " respondence is very practicable; for there is *an am-* " *bient* OMNIPRESENT *spirit*, which lies as open and per- " vious to your mind, as the air you breathe does to your " lungs. But then you must remember to be disposed " to draw it.

" If," continues Dr. Delany, " this gracious *gift of* " *Heaven* should be denied, because it is not found to " dwell with the wicked, I answer, that men may as " well deny the existence of the DEW, because it is not " often found upon clods and filth, nor even upon grass, " trampled with polluted feet.

" Let the grace of God be considered as having some
" analogy, some resemblance to the DEW OF HEAVEN;
" the dew of Heaven, which falls alike upon all objects be-
" low it, as the grace of God doth upon all mankind, but
" resteth not upon things defiled. Purity abideth not
" with pollution."

There is an elemental fire, the electrical fluid, diffused through all nature. Though unseen, its energy is mighty. So also the *Divine Spirit* actuates the intellectual world, omnipresent, irresistible, invisible.

SECTION XXIX.

The Want of Faith could not be criminal, *if it depended only on the Understanding; but Faith is a* Virtue, *because it originates from virtuous dispositions favoured by the Holy Spirit.*

FAITH is always required and represented in the gospel as a *moral virtue*. This alone establishes the doctrine of this book, that faith, or the evidence of the Christian religion, arises from *obedience* to its laws. There could be no virtue in faith, if it were produced in the mind by *demonstrative* proofs, such as many apologists for Christianity have endeavoured to display. But there is great virtue in OBEDIENCE to the moral precepts of the gospel. The heart must be *well inclined* that endeavours to learn and perform its duty from the dictates of the gospel, notwithstanding the doubts or disbelief which may occasionally arise in the understanding concerning the divine original of so excellent a rule of morality. Such an inclination draws down upon it the favour of God, and consequently the illumination of the Holy Ghost. The doubts and disbelief are gradually removed. A life of piety and good morals is the never-failing result. And thus faith both begins and ends in virtue.

" The reason," says Dr. Clarke, " why faith (which " is generally looked upon as an act of understanding, " and so not in our power) in the New Testament is " always insisted upon as a moral virtue, is, because " faith, in the scripture sense, is not barely an act of the " understanding, but a mixed act of the will also, consisting very much in that simplicity and unprejudicedness of mind, which our Saviour calls receiving the " kingdom of God, as a little child, in that freedom from " guile and deceit, which was the character of Nathaniel, " an Israelite indeed; and in that teachable disposition, " and desire to know the will of God, for which the Beræans were so highly commended, *who searched the* " *scriptures daily, whether these things were true.*"

This simple, teachable, unprejudiced state of mind is in itself amiable. It is pleasing both to God and good men. It is esteemed even by the wicked. It is precisely the state in which the Holy Spirit delights, and with which he will make his abode, bringing with him comfort and illumination. To use the poet's words;

" ———He must delight in virtue;
" And that which he delights in must be happy."

If indeed it were a *moral virtue* merely to *believe* a narrative on the credibility of the narrators, or the probability of the circumstances, then would it be a moral virtue to believe a well-authenticated news-paper. But to believe the gospel requires purity and piety of heart, those lovely qualities which the imagination conceives characteristic of the angelic nature. It implies a disposition which delights in devotion to God, and beneficence to man; a disposition cheerful, tranquil, and which enjoys every innocent satisfaction of this life, sweetened with the hope, that when the sun sets, it will rise in new and additional splendor. Faith, accompanied with hope and charity, constitutes the true Christian; a *living image* of virtue, and forming that beautiful model which the philosopher, wished, but despaired to see; TRUTH EMBODIED, VIRTUE PERSONIFIED, walking forth among the sons of men, and exciting, by its conspicuous loveliness, an universal desire of imitation.

SECTION XXX.

Of the scriptural word "UNCTION;" its high mysterious Meaning.

THE very title of our Saviour (משיח and ΧΡΙΣΤΟΣ) is the ANOINTED; and the operation of the Holy Ghost is called in the sacred scriptures (ΧΡΙΣΜΑ) UNCTION. This idea of the CHRISMA pervades the whole doctrine of grace.

"The anointing with oil," says Hammond, "denoted, among the Jews, the preferring one before " another, (and the *Targum* generally renders it by a " word which signifies preferring or advancing,) and so " became the ceremony of CONSECRATING to any special office, and was used in the installing men to places " of any eminence."

The word *Chrisma*, or unction, was hence assumed to signify the act of the Holy Ghost, in CONSECRATING those who are favoured by divine grace. The consequence of this UNCTION is illumination; for St. John says, "Ye *have* an UNCTION from the Holy One, (the " Holy Ghost,) and ye (in consequence) KNOW ALL " THINGS*;" that is, all things that concern the nature and EVIDENCE of CHRIST'S religion. Again he says, "the anointing which ye have received of HIM (the "Holy Ghost) abideth in you; and ye need not that any "MAN teach you; but as the same ANOINTING teacheth "you all things, and is truth, and is no lie; even as it "has taught you, ye shall abide in him.[*]"

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* 1 John ii. 20.

The idea of the CHRISMA, I repeat, or *unction*[†], pervades the whole doctrine of divine grace. It gives a name to him who brought down the great gift of the Spirit, and who himself had the hallowed UNCTION *without measure*[‡]; for what is signified by CHRIST, but the *Anointed*[||]?

I have introduced these observations on the name of CHRIST, partly with a view to expose the false learning of a *French philosopher*, who has attacked Christianity with singular artifice. The celebrated Mr. Volney affirms, that Christianity is but the allegorical worship of the SUN—a mere mode of oriental superstition, under the cabalistical names of CHRISEN or CHRIST, the etymology of which, according to him, has no reference to the CHRISMA, UNCTION, but to CHRIS, an astrological name among the Indians for the SUN, and signifying *conservator*; "whence," says he, "the Hindoo god, Chrisen, or Christna, and the Christian CHRISTOS, the son "of Mary."—Many of the French philosophers, and perhaps Volney, are unacquainted with *Greek*.

But I hope the christian scholar will never give up the Greek etymology of the word CHRIST, evidently a translation of the Hebrew *Messiah*; nor the sublime and mysterious doctrine which it leads to, the metaphorical

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[*] 1 John, ii. 27.

[†] *Dieu fait couler dans l'ame je ne scais quelle* ONCTION *qui la remplit.* BRETONNEAU.

[‡] John, iii. 34.

[||] κατ' ἐξοχην.

anointing of the Holy Ghost, the sanctifying, consecrating, purifying influence of divine grace*.

SECTION XXXI.

On what is called by devout Persons EXPERIENCE *in Religion.*

THERE is a peace of God, which passeth all understanding, and baffles all power of description. The flavour of a peach or a pine-apple is delightful to the palate, but words can give no idea of it to him who has never tasted them. There is a fragrance in a rose, which, while the nerves perceive it with complacency, cannot be communicated, in the slightest degree, by language. Such also is the heavenly manna; and he who would form a just notion of its exquisite sweetness, must taste it. No learning, not even the argumentative skill of an Aristotle, can afford him the least idea of it, without actual sensation.

" Were I to define divinity," (says the admirable author of Select Discourses,) " I should rather call it a " divine life, than † a divine science; it being something

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* Mr. Volney further says, that " YESUS, or Jesus, was an " antient name given to young Bacchus, the clandestine son of " the virgin, Minerva, who, in the whole history of his life, and " even in his death, calls to mind the history of the God of the " Christians; that is, the STAR OF THE DAY, of which they are " both of them EMBLEMS." Let us avoid the folly of *fanciful learning;* and say rather that the *Star of the Day* is an EMBLEM of of JESUS CHRIST, gloriously enlightening, and vitally warming, by his influence, the INTELLECTUAL system.

† Bishop Taylor and Mr. Smith coincide here, not only in sentiment, but expression.

“ rather to be understood by a spiritual sensation, than by any verbal description.

“ Divinity is a true efflux from the eternal light, which, like the sun-beams, does not only enlighten, but heat and enliven. The knowledge of divinity that appears in systems is but a poor wax-light; but the powerful ENERGY of divine knowledge displays itself in *purified souls*, the true Πεδιον Αληϑειας*.

“ To seek our divinity merely in books and writings, is to seek the living among the dead. We do but in vain seek God, many times, in these, where his truth too often is not so much enshrined as intombed. No; *intra te quære Deum;* seek for God within thine own soul. He is best discerned † νοερᾳ επαφῃ, by an *intellectual feeling*. Εστι δε ψυχης αιϑησις τις, *the soul itself has a certain feeling*.

“ The reason why, notwithstanding all our acute reasonings and subtile pursuits, truth prevails no more in the world, is, that we so often disjoin truth and goodness, which of themselves can never be disunited.

“ There is a *knowing of the truth as it is in Jesus;* as it is in a Christ-like nature; as it is in that sweet, mild, humble, and loving spirit of Jesus, which spreads itself, like a morning sun, upon the souls of good men, full of light and life. There is an inward beauty, life, and loveliness in divine truth, which cannot be known, but only when it is digested into life and practice.

“ Our Saviour, the great master of divine truth, would not, while he was here on earth, draw it up into a *system* or body, nor would his disciples after him: he would not lay it out to us in any *canons* or articles of belief, not being so careful to stock and enrich the world with opinions, as with true piety, and a godlike

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* The soil in which TRUTH grows and flourishes.

† Plotinus.

" pattern of purity, as the best way to thrive in all spi-
" ritual understanding. His main scope was to pro-
" mote a holy life, as the best and most compendious
" way to a right belief. He hangs all true acquaintance
" with divinity upon the doing God's will. If any man
" will do his will, he shall know of the doctrine, whether
" it be of God. This is that alone which will make us,
" as St. Peter tells us, that we shall not be barren nor
" unfruitful in the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour.

" There is an inward sweetness and deliciousness in
" divine truth, which no sensual mind can taste or relish.
" The ψυχικος ανηρ, the *natural man savours* not the
" things of God. Corrupt passions and terrene affec-
" tions are apt, of their own nature, to disturb all serene
" thoughts, to precipitate our judgments, and warp our
" understandings. It was a good maxim of the old
" Jewish writers, that the Holy Spirit * dwells not in
" *earthly passions.* Divinity is not so well perceived by
" a subtile wit, ωσπερ αιθησει κεκαθὰρμενη, as by pure sen-
" sation."

" He that will find truth, must seek it with a free
" judgment, and a SANCTIFIED mind: he that *thus*
" seeks, shall find: he shall live in truth, and truth shall
" live in him: it shall be like a stream of living waters
" issuing out of his *own* soul: he shall drink of the
" waters of his own cistern, and be satisfied: he shall
" every morning find this heavenly MANNA lying upon
" his soul, and be fed with it to eternal life. He will
" find *satisfaction* within, FEELING himself in conjunc-
" tion with truth, though all the world should DISPUTE
" against him."

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* ” דוה הקדש לא שרה בעצב דלא בכעש“.
The RUACH HAKKODESH, *or Spirit of Holiness, dwells not with turbulent and angry tempers.*

Thus the heart of a good man will *experience* the most pleasurable sensations, when he finds, and find it he will, the *pearl of great price*, the living *energetic* gospel, lodged, by divine grace, in the sanctuary of his bosom. He will *be filled with all joy in believing;* and thus EXPERIENCING the efficacy of the Christian religion, he can entertain no doubt of its truth, its divine original. The *real* difficulties and obscurities of the scriptures give him little trouble, much less the cavils of sceptics. He has the *witness in himself*[*], that the gospel is *the word of God*, the *incorruptible seed*[†] of holiness, and such felicity as the world never gave, and cannot take away. He cannot adequately describe his [‡] state. It is an UNSPEAKABLE *gift*. He feels it; and is grateful.

The excellent Norris, after having spent many years in the usual studies of academics, in logic, metaphysics, and other, what he calls, unconcerning curiosities, comes to the following resolution:

"I think," says he, "I shall now chiefly apply my-
"self to the reading of such books as are rather *persua-*
"*sive* than *instructive;* such as are *sapid*, pathetic, and
"divinely relishing; such as warm, kindle, and enlarge
"the interior, and awaken *the divine sense* (or feeling)
"of the soul; as considering with myself, that I have
"now, after so much reading and speculation, more need
"of HEAT than of *light*. Though if I were for more
"light still, I think *this would prove the best method of*
"*illumination;* and when all is done, the love of God is
"the best light of the soul. For I consider with the
"excellent CARDINAL BONA, that a man may have

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[*] 1 John, v. 10. [†] 1 Pet. i. 23.

[‡] THOMAS A KEMPIS thus attempts to describe the happy state, imperfectly indeed, but devoutly: "*Frequens Christi visita-*
"*tio cum homine interno, dulcis sermocinatio, grata consolatio, multa*
"*pax,*" &c.

"knowledge without love; but he that loves, although "he wants sciences, humanly acquired, yet he will know "more than human wisdom can teach him, because he "has that master *within him*, who teaches man knowledge*."

If other students and teachers were to follow his example in this instance, there would be much more true devotion and sincere piety in the world; and few would be infidels, except among the desperately profligate, who harden their hearts, and cloud their understandings by habitual vice and intemperance; who *fear* Christianity should be true, and therefore, with fool-hardy presumption, resolve to deny it.

SECTION XXXII.

On the Seasons of Grace.

THERE are times when the mind seems sensible of a peculiar serenity; the understanding is clear to discern spiritual things, and the heart glows with sentiments of Christian piety and general benevolence. At those times, man appears to be exalted above the common level of mortality. All pure, all peace, all love, all joy, his nature endeavours to soar above the earth, and to reach the source of all excellence. A sweet complacency, in those moments, diffuses itself over the soul, and an internal satisfaction is experienced, which no language can describe: but which renders him who feels it as happy as it is possible to become in a sublunary existence.

These are the halcyon times which may be termed the seasons of grace; the seasons, when the God of mercy, compassionating the weary pilgrim, sends down the cup of comfort to exhilarate and reward him; displays the lamp of heaven, to illuminate his path as he travels in the valley.

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* Via *Compend. ad Deum.*

These favours, as I firmly believe, are offered to all the sons of Adam who do not presumptuously and repeatedly and knowingly offend the donor; for that man may *grieve* the Spirit and *quench* the Spirit, we are told in the strong language of scripture.

But a proper reception of this divine benefit will secure its frequency and continuance. Our own endeavours must be exerted with vigilance and constancy, to preserve the *divine frame of mind* which it may have produced. Nothing can effect this but the avoidance of habitual vice and impurity, and the practice of virtue. But if, after all, there should be seasons of insensibility and coldness, it must not be concluded that the spiritual assistance is withdrawn in displeasure. For even in the darkest valley, an unseen hand can support and guide the pilgrim in his progress; and after the clouds shall have prevailed their time, the sun will break forth with all its warmth and lustre.

It appears to me to be the first object of CHRISTIAN PHILOSOPHY to secure the duration and frequent recurrence of the seasons of grace. In order to accomplish this end, whatever conduces to the moral improvement of the heart must be pursued with ardour. The fine morality, discovered by the light of nature and the feelings of the heart, probably assisted, among the heathens, by divine interposition, may and ought to be called in to add something to the work of Christian improvement; for the best heathen ETHICS are founded on truth, and therefore immutably valuable. A state of grace without morality, I firmly believe, is not permitted by him who is of purer eyes than to behold iniquity.

But the man who is blessed with the visitations of the divine Spirit, feels his heart spontaneously inclined to every thing that is lovely and of good report. Virtue appears to him amiable, and easy to be practised; and vice disgustful, at once the pollution and the misery of his nature. All the angry passions subside in him; the gentle and benevolent affections grow in their place, and man becomes what he was before the lapse of Adam, and what the gospel revelation was designed to render him, a being little lower than the angels.

SECTION XXXIII.

Of mistaking the Effects of Imagination for the Seasons of Grace.

THERE are many who will scarcely allow the existence of any thing which they cannot subject to the notice of the senses. They must literally see the truth of every thing which requires their assent, or they will doubt its reality. To them, whatever is said on the subject of a spiritual world, or an invisible agency on the soul of man, appears to be the effusion of fancy, and the sick man's dream.

And indeed the experience of mankind justifies great caution in distinguishing between the actual operation of the Holy Spirit, and the delirious effects of a too lively imagination. The imagination heated by the devotional flame, has often kindled a destructive fire. It is indeed the parent of fanaticism, in all its extremities, and all its evil consequences. As, therefore, the real agency of the Holy Spirit is to be invited and cherished, so the mere imagination of it is to be most studiously avoided.

That the whole doctrine is not imaginary, is evident to him who reads and believes the gospel. Such operations are there plainly spoken of and promised as the greatest blessings to the human race. Their effects are described as great and sudden, in affording both comfort, holiness, and illumination.

The reality of seasons of grace cannot be questioned but by him who at the same time questions the whole system of revelation. And a rational man, it is to be believed, will find no difficulty in satisfying himself that he is not deluded by his imagination, when he feels himself particularly virtuous, pure, benevolent, and open to celestial influence.

But as all men are not governed by reason, and none are governed by it uniformly, it certainly is probable that the delusions of imagination may often be mistaken for supernatural assistance. A few cautionary suggestions on the subject may not, therefore, be superfluous.

Since it is possible that the best-intentioned may be thus deluded, let every man try his spirit by the fruits it produces; not by a sudden or momentary fruit, but by the frequency and abundance of its productions. If it *habitually* produces peace, joy, purity, piety, and benevolence, let no man attribute it to his imagination; but give the glory to God, and be grateful.

But if it display itself in pride, self-conceit, and contempt of others, in acts of violence, in disturbing good order, in any behaviour which seems to argue an opinion of *peculiar* inspiration from heaven, of a partial commission, delegated to reform the world by irregular, uncharitable and offensive interposition; if it pretends to visions and illuminations unexperienced by the best and wisest of men; if it assumes the privilege of actually conversing IN PERSON with Jesus Christ, and talks of the hour and moment when the Holy Ghost rushed upon the bosom; it is time to beware of the infatuation of a deluded fancy. There is certainly every reason to believe that such a temper of mind is not from God.

But it is folly and impiety to confound with these that sweet frame and disposition of mind, which the scriptures describe as descending from the Holy Ghost, and which has indeed every mark of divine origin.

He who condemns the doctrine of divine agency on the mind of man as, FANCIFUL, must, if he is consistent, include the whole of the Christian religion, and all that has ever been said or written in favour of it, under the same imputation. According to him, the fair edifice must melt away, like a palace of ice, when the sun of reason shines upon it. But we maintain that the true gospel, which is indeed the doctrine of grace, is the ROCK of ages.

SECTION XXXIV.

Of Seasons of Desertion, or supposed Absence of the Spirit.

THERE are seasons in the lives of good men, when their sense of spiritual things is comparatively dull; and many, at these times, have been alarmed with an idea of being totally deserted by the Spirit, and have fallen into a state of despondency. But if there were no other proof that the grace of God is still vouchsafed to them, their uneasiness alone would evince it. While pain is felt, the surgeon apprehends not a mortification.

But the alarm, it may be presumed, is, to the pious Christian, unnecessary. For it is certain that the visitations of the Holy Spirit are sometimes more sensible than at others; and that when they are not sensible at all, its guidance and benign protection may continue unaltered. The light sometimes shines with a bright and strong effulgence, to guide us into the right way; but while we are proceeding in it safely and regularly, and without an inclination to deviate, or immediate danger of falling, the rays may be emitted less powerfully, because less necessary. The moment there appears danger of wandering or of stumbling, the lamp is ready to shine with instantaneous radiance. Thus an infant, just beginning to walk, is guided by the parent's hand, watched with a parent's eye, and encouraged by the parent's voice, and yet it is often permitted to go alone, without assistance or encouragement, in order to exercise its strength, and to give it a due degree of confidence. But the tender mother may still hold the leading-string unobserved by the infant, and, at the very first lapse, save the fall. The sun, though obscured by clouds, affords both light and warmth, guides mankind in all their operations, and supports both animal and vegetative life.

The mistaken opinion that ecstasy and rapture are always necessary to evince the presence of the Holy Spirit, has brought the doctrine into discredit among the sober and rational, and introduced much misery among the ignorant, the weak, and the fanciful. The sober and rational neither experienced such ardour without *intermission*, nor did they believe the nature of man, as he is now constituted, capable of supporting it. The ignorant, the weak, and the fanciful, endeavouring to raise themselves to a height which they could either not reach or not maintain, fell from disappointment to dejection, and from dejection to despair.

In truth, the influence of the Spirit rushes not like a continual torrent, but flows as a gentle river, which, indeed, for the most part, displays its silver surface in the meadows, but may sometimes conceal itself, without being lost, in a subterranean channel.

While we retain faith, hope, and charity, and while we seek the favour of God in fervent prayer, we have every reason to believe that GRACE abounds in us, though we should not, for a considerable time, be favoured with the livelier experience of its immediate energy. If we persevere in a virtuous course, we may rest assured that God will, at all proper intervals, and for our reward and encouragement, shew us the light of his countenance.

Let the pious Christian remember, that HOPE is placed, in the celebrated enumeration of Christian virtues, next to faith, and before charity. Let him, therefore, take care not to indulge the least tendency to such melancholy ideas of desertion as may lead to despair. God will not behold a sincerely contrite heart, anxious to find grace, without affording it; and though, for wise purposes of trial, it is possible that he may not, for a short time, bestow it in its more *sensible* influences, yet there is every reason to believe, that he who *sincerely grieves* because he thinks himself less *favoured* by the *Holy Spirit* than usual, is, on that very account, in a STATE OF GRACE, and therefore safe.

SECTION XXXV.

Of the Doctrine that the Operations of the Holy Spirit are NEVER *distinguishable from the Operations of our own Minds.*

INGENIOUS and philosophical divines, desirous of discouraging, to the utmost of their power, all fanciful pretensions to the guidance of the Holy Spirit, have boldly affirmed that its influence is not to be distinguished from the ordinary operations of the human mind. Their endeavour to prevent the evils of a wild imagination deserves praise; but they should be cautious of misrepresenting the effects of divine agency, and denying truth, with a design of obviating error.

From the plain and repeated accounts of scripture, it appears that this divine agency produces a very great alteration in the mind; a much greater than could be produced by its own natural operations. It is God that worketh in you, saith St. Paul, both to will and to do of his good pleasure*.

I speak with the utmost diffidence, when I say that it appears probable that such powerful *energy* is *sometimes* distinguishable from the spontaneous operations of the mind. I am sensible that the doctrine may open a door to fanatical extravagance; but if it is the true doctrine, it ought to be maintained, whatever may be the consequences.

The influence of the Holy Ghost is represented in scripture as consolatory. When a good man, in deep affliction, feels, in consequence of his prayer and devotion, a spring of comfort flowing upon his mind, such as no reasoning of his own, no external circumstances, no condolence of his friends could produce, is there not reason to believe that the influence of God's Holy Spirit is upon him, and that it is distinguishable from his own thoughts and imagination? The operations of his own mind lead only to horror and dismay; but a light rises up in the darkness; and is it not easy to perceive that this unexpected radiance is the day-spring from on high?

When the pious Christian, employed in fervent prayer, finds himself full of holy joy and humble confidence, and feels his heart melt within him, overflowing with love of God and charity to man, is there not more presumption in attributing this state to the mere operations of his own mind, than to the God of spirits, actually dispensing that grace or favour which he has promised, in the gospel, to the faithful?

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* Phil. ii. 13.

When temptations to sin assault with violence, and a man feels himself strengthened, so as to be able to overcome, at the very moment of his intended surrender, shall he erect the victorious trophies to his own virtue? His own reason and resolution had betrayed him, the operations of his own unassisted mind tended to concession; but God gave him strength from his holy place, and to God only is due the praise.

Innumerable are the circumstances and situations in life, in which comfort, illuminations, protection, and strength are afforded in a degree and manner, which it is much more unreasonable to think could be produced by the mere operations of the mind, than that they were supplied by the author and giver of all good.

In making the distinction between the operations of the Holy Spirit and those of the human mind, the wisest men will ever be obnoxious to mistake. The weak, wicked, and hypocritical may deceive themselves or others in it, to the injury or offence of many. But still the inconveniences of this perversion cannot entirely justify divines in their confidential and repeated assertions, that since the extraordinary gifts of the Spirit, such as were bestowed on the apostles, have ceased, the operations of the Holy Ghost on the mind are *in no instance or degree* to be distinguished from its own operations. These assertions approach nearly to an entire denial of the doctrine: a very dangerous and impious blasphemy*.

"* *Nam si tota Dei actio consistit in clarâ evangelii propositione, opportunè factâ, cur* omnipotentia *ad id requiritur? Quorsum adhibentur a* PAULO *magnificæ illæ voses, ad describendam, quam exerit Deus in nobis, omnipotentiam,* Eph. i. 18, 19. *quum dicit esse υπερβαλλον μεγεθος δυναμεως et κατα την ενεργειαν του κρατους της ισχυος.*"—To assert that the POWER of God working in us, differs not perceptibly from the ordinary power of man.—

SECTION XXXVI.

Of devotional Feelings or SENTIMENTS.

THE pious devotee has exposed himself to the derision of the scorner, by talking of spiritual feelings which he could not accurately describe; and the reality of which can never be proved by *external* testimony.

But I know not why the word *feeling*, which, in this age, is applied to all occasions, should not be applied to religion. The lover, the artist, the connoisseur enlarge upon the acuteness of their feelings in the contemplation of the excellence they admire. The man of delicacy is for ever boasting of his fine feelings, and the beautiful embarrassment which they create. The spectator in a theatre, the hearer at a concert, expatiates on the effect which the spectacle and the music have produced on his *feelings;* and shall not he who contemplates the universe, and adores the maker of it, and of those powers by which he both adores and contemplates, shall not he be allowed to *feel;* and when his bosom glows with love, gratitude, and devotion, shall his pretentions to feelings be stigmatized as the delirious language of a wild enthusiasm?

" *Annon hoc est actionem omnipotentem Dei* obscurare *et in nihilum* " *ferme redigere?* TURETIN.

It may here be asked, What man can judge *infallibly* of that which passes in the mind of another? Yet many RATIONAL divines *dogmatically* declare to their disciples, that it is *impossible*, in any circumstances, to distinguish the energy of God's grace on their hearts, from the common and *natural* workings of the passions and imagination. This is to assume a power of discernment which belongs to him only, to "*whom all hearts are open, and* "*from whom no secrets are hidden.*"

The frigid temper of scholastic theology would deny the reality of every thing which, from its own defect of sensibility, it never yet experienced.

That the divine Spirit, operating on the mind, should cause in it a SERENITY, a tranquility, a comfort, which no words can express, is highly credible; when a thousand inferior agents, or causes, are able to produce emotions of various kinds; gentle or violent, painful or pleasing. But well-meaning divines, endeavouring to explode those extravagant pretensions to *feeling*, which have deluded the vulgar, disturbed society, and driven many to madness, have denied the possibility of such SENTIMENTS, and attributed them entirely to the force of fancy, to folly, and to hypocrisy. They deserved praise for their endeavour to prevent evil; but by exceeding the bounds of truth in their censure, they prevented good at the same time. For their doctrines unintentionally taught men to neglect the benign seasons of grace, and to confound the holy assistance of heaven with the mere operations of the human mind. They allow that the scripture plainly speaks of heavenly influence; but they boldly assert, that it can NEVER be distinguished from the ordinary actings of natural sentiment, intellect, passion, and imagination.

The word feelings, in religion, has been treated with such contempt and ridicule, that the truth is in danger of suffering, without a fair examination. Such is the force of words and prepossession. But let the word be changed to the synonymous term, SENTIMENT, and then let any one object, with solid argument, to giving the name of religious sentiment to that pious, virtuous, pure state of mind, which is caused by the influence of the Holy Ghost, in the happy hour when God, in his mercy, showers it down, more abundantly than usual, on the human bosom.

But, on this topic, great caution is required; for men, especially the ignorant and passionate, are prone to attribute their own dreams and emotions to demoniacal or celestial impressions. Such a persuasion leads to spiritual pride*, to a perseverance in error and vice, to cruelty, and to persecution. He who is acquainted with ecclesiastical history, will recollect many dreadful examples of false feelings, and pretended inspiration. The deluded and deluding persons have represented themselves as prophets, new Messiahs, and even as God; and what is more extraordinary, they have persuaded many to believe them, and have conducted a willing multitude to whatever mischief their zealous hearts erroneously conceived.

While, therefore, a conviction that there *is indeed a religious* SENTIMENT, or a *divine and holy feeling*, which impresses the heart more forcibly than any argument, induces me to maintain so important a truth; I must, in the most anxious and importunate terms, express my desire that none may teach, and none submit to be taught, a belief, at this period, in EXTRAORDINARY inspiration.

All spiritual pride, all cruelty, all persecution, are, in their nature, repugnant to the spirit of grace: and though they probably proceed from strong feelings, they are feelings arising from passion, fancy, and actual insanity. Whoever is under their influence, must have recourse to the SPIRIT OF GRACE, that his feelings or sentiments may become all gentle, benevolent, peaceable, and humble. If his extravagancies still continue to carry him to injurious actions and disorderly behaviour, application must be made to the physician, or, in cases of extremity, the civil magistrate.

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* False religion is always ostentatious. Its object is to be noticed, admired, revered. When *men talk* of their FEELINGS, there is reason to suspect vanity, hypocrisy, or knavery. It is justly said, NON EST RELIGIO, UBI OMNIA PATENT.

There can be nothing in the genuine SENTIMENT, or *feelings*, occasioned by the spirit of God, which is not friendly to man, improving to his nature, and co-operating with all that sound philosophy and benignant laws have ever done to advance the happiness of the human race.

SECTION XXXVII.

Of Enthusiasm.

ENTHUSIASM is commonly used and understood in a bad sense; but if its real meaning* be attended to, it may certainly admit of a very fine one. It means a consciousness or persuasion that the Deity is actually present, by an immediate emanation or impulse on the mind of the enthusiast; the reality of which, in certain cases, is the doctrine of the church and of the gospel; a doctrine sufficiently consonant to reason, and not necessarily connected with self-delusion, folly, madness, or fanaticism.

But because many have made pretensions to the privilege of God's immediate presence in their hearts, whose lives and conduct gave reason to suspect that they were not thus favoured, the word enthusiasm, which, in common language, expressed their false pretensions, has fallen into disgrace, and now often implies no more than the idea of a bigot, or a devotee, weakly deluded by the fond visions of a disordered imagination.

But let not enthusiasm of the better kind, a modest confidence of being assisted, as the gospel promises, by the agency of the Holy Spirit, be involved in undeserved disgrace.* We are taught that the Divinity resides in the pure heart. The belief of it is indeed enthusiasm, but it is enthusiasm of the noble, the virtuous, the necessary kind. The ardour which it inspires is laudable. Like that of all other good things, the corruption and abuse of it is productive of great evil; but still it is not itself to be exploded.

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* ΕΝ ΘΕΟΣ.

There is, indeed, a cold philosophy, which seems to discourage all the warm sentiments of affection, and will hardly allow them in any thing which concerns religion. It aims at reducing theology to a scholastic science, and would willingly descant on the love of God, and the sublimest discoveries of the gospel, in the same frigidity of temper as it would explain the metaphysics of Aristotle. But there is a natural and laudable ardour in the mind of man, whenever it contemplates magnificent objects; and which is certainly to be expected, when that object is the Lord God omnipotent, and the human soul, the particle of Deity, aspiring at re-union with the Supreme Being, and meditating on immortality.

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* "GRATIA IMMEDIATA *qualis ab orthodoxis docetur, nihil*
" *habet commune cum enthusiasmo, sed diversimodè ab eo differt.*

" 1. *Enthusiasmus* novas *quærit Revelationes* extra verbum; *sed*
" GRATIA IMMEDIATA nullas, *quia verbum semper* comitatur,
" *nec aliud agit, quàm ut illud menti imprimat.*

" 2. *In enthusiasmo, objecta quæ menti imprimuntur non extrin-*
" *secus adveniunt, sed intus a Spiritu per arcanas inspirationes sug-*
" *geruntur. Sed hìc objectum supponitur semper extrinsecus advenire*
" *et ex verbo peti.*

" 3. *Enthusiasmus fit per subitos motus, qui ipsum discursum et*
" *ratiocinationem antevertunt, et sæpe excludunt. Sed Spiritûs ope-*
" *ratio non excludit, sed secum trahit ratiocinationem et gratum*
" *voluntatis consensum.*

" *Deniquè, ne plura discrimina jam persequamur, enthusiasmus*
" *non infert cordis mutationem; et* mentem *afficit*, IMMUTATA
" *sæpe manente* VOLUNTATE; *unde in* IMPIOS *etiam cadit, ut in*
" *Balaamo et aliis visum; sed* OPERATIO GRATIæ *necessario in-*
" *fert* cordis mutationem *et* sanctitatis studium." TURRETIN.

This author here speaks of *enthusiasm* in its vulgar sense—which is certainly a DISEASE; a mental FEVER, attended with delirium.

Is there not an ardour of enthusiasm which admires and produces excellence in the arts of music, painting, and poetry? And shall it be allowed in the humble province of imitative skill, and exploded in contemplating the GREAT ARCHETYPE of all; the source of life, beauty, order, grandeur, and sublimity? Shall I hear a symphony, or behold a picture, a statue, or a fine prospect, with rapture, and at the same time consider God, who made both the object and the sense that perceives it, with the frigid indifference of abstracted philosophy? Shall I meditate on heaven, hell, death, and judgment, with all the coolness with which a lawyer draws a formal instrument, an arithmetician computes a sum, or a logician forms a syllogism in mood and figure?

Such coolness, on such subjects, arises not from superiority of wisdom, but from pride and vain philosophy, from acquired *calosity* or natural insensibility of temper. God has bestowed on man a liveliness of fancy, and a warmth of affection, as well as an accuracy and acuteness of reason and intellect; he has bestowed a HEART vibrating with the tender chords of love and pity, as well as a *brain* furnished with fibres adapted to subtle disquisition.

The scriptures afford many examples of a laudable and natural enthusiasm. *My heart was hot within me*, says David; and the warm poetry of the psalms, the rapturous style of prophecy, are proofs that those who have been *singularly favoured* by God, were of tempers which the modern philosophers would call enthusiastical. Their fire was kindled at the altar. St. John was a burning and a shining light. St. Paul was avowedly of an ardent temper, and a glowing imagination; nor did our Saviour himself express his sentiments in the cold language of the Aristotelian school, but with emphasis and pathos.

They who rail at enthusiasm, in general terms, and without making a due distinction between the scriptural and the false kind, consist either of those who laudably endeavour to discredit the pretensions of the hypocrite, and the weak brother; or of those who, from their speculative habits, their cold tempers, or irreligious lives, labour to discountenance all pretensions to an excellence and purity, which they never felt, and to which they could not rise.

Whoever believes what the scriptures indisputably affirm, that the *body is the* TEMPLE OF THE HOLY SPIRIT, and that he actually resides in it, when it is purified sufficiently for his reception, is so far an ENTHUSIAST: but let him glory in the appellation, for he is such an one as every Christian, who thinks and feels in conformity to the gospel he professes, must be of necessity. If he denies the agency of the Spirit of God on the soul of man, he denies the most important doctrine of revelation, and must be a stranger to its finest effects on the human bosom.

But since such is the case, let those who very laudably write against enthusiasm* of the false kind, take care not to confound truth with falsehood; and not to proceed to such an extreme in refuting the pretensions of hypocrites, fools or knaves, as to infringe on the genuine and sublime doctrine of grace, the glory of the everlasting gospel.

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* There is an old saying, "Give a dog an ill name, and they'll "hang him." Thus also, give the doctrine of grace, though plainly EVANGELICAL, the name of ENTHUSIASM or METHODISM, and a very great part of mankind will immediately explode it, without the slightest examination.

The name of *methodists* has been given to all the clergy, who preach or profess the doctrines of the reformation, as expressed in the articles, homilies, and the liturgy of the church, to which they have solemnly assented, in the presence of God and man.

SECTION XXXVIII.

Cautions concerning Enthusiasm.

So many and so melancholy are the effects of mistaken and excessive enthusiasm, recorded in the annals of mankind, that wise men are justly alarmed at every appearance of it, and little inclined to give it indulgence.

Whatever there has been of savage cruelty, whatever of public violence, and tumult, and confusion, the utmost extremes of all these evils, in all their consequences, have been equalled by the frantic extravagance of false enthusiasm. It has exhibited, in some tempers, all the symptoms of a malignant disease, and terminated, at last, in real and most deplorable insanity.

If then it be wisdom to obviate the approaches of distemper, those men have evinced themselves wise, who have laboured to discourage, by all the arts of ridicule and argument, the earliest tendencies among the people to religious phrenzy. There are innocent follies, and there is a madness, which is only the object of compassion; but the folly and madness of the bigot are detestable, because they are destructive as a pestilence. Against such an enemy to human happiness, philosophy has urged her best reason, justice has unsheathed her sword, and the stage, to complete the triumph, has played all the batteries of derision.

But argumentation, coercive force, and even ridicule, have been found ineffectual. All these are classed, by the bigot, under the term persecution, and persecution, like a current of air, adds violence to fire. The gentler, the kinder, the more Christian mode of expostulation and rational concession, wherever concession can be made, may, like a balsamic vulnerary, heal the sore which opposition would cause to rankle.

I therefore do not deny the justice of the enthusiast's pretensions, who professes himself actuated by a belief that the Holy Spirit condescends to assist him in virtuous endeavours, by a sacred influence from Heaven. But I caution him against entertaining, for a moment, the presumptuous idea, that the same Spirit which assists him, does not, with equal readiness and efficacy, assist his pious neighbour also, and all sincere believers, throughout Christendom, however distinguished by sect, church, or persuasion.

I urge him to try his Spirit by the infallible touchstone of scripture. Is it pure, is it peaceable, is it gentle, easy to be entreated, full of mercy and good fruits, without partiality, and without hypocrisy*? If it should be deficient in any of these amiable qualities, let him be cautious of indulging it, lest the Spirit should be of a diabolical, and not of a heavenly nature.

And in what manner is he to form a judgment of himself, since the heart is deceitful; and to know oneself is the most difficult of sciences? If his high pretensions are accompanied with a bad life; if he be disposed to contend with rancour and violence in support of his pretensions; if he be disposed to involve all who think differently from him in perdition; if he decry good works; and if, with every appearance of sanctity, and many external acts of piety and benevolence, he reserves to himself some *secret and favourite vice*, he may rest assured, that the Spirit which actuates him is not from above.

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* James, iii. 17.

If he be inclined to neglect, despise, and revile decent and useful ordinances, such as are countenanced by scripture, and have a direct tendency to preserve peace, benevolence, and piety; if he prefers himself to all regular and learned ministers, whether in the establishment or out of it, and preaches to ignorant and deluded multitudes in the fields, with the air and voice of phrenzy, he may have just reason to fear, though he should have ten thousand in his train, that he has carried his pretensions to the Spirit beyond that wisdom, moderation, and love of order, which the author of our religion taught, both by precept and example.

If, in his writings, he applies the scriptural language to himself, and assumes the authority of a primitive apostle; if, at the same time, he expresses his ideas in such a manner as to excite the laughter and contempt of men of sense and approved goodness, he may infer that his spiritual pride has hurried him to the verge of insanity; and, as he values his health and happiness, should exert himself to remove the febrile symptoms, which are at once contagious and fatal.

When mechanics, of confined education, and not remarkable for natural discernment, or peculiar virtue and goodness, think themselves better able to instruct the people, than a numerous class of their fellow-citizens, who have been separated, from their youth, for sacred offices, instructed in learning of various kinds, versed in the original languages of scripture; the very idea implies so great a degree of pride and self-conceit that it cannot come from the gentle, unassuming spirit of Him who was himself meek and lowly, and who every where taught his disciples the lesson of humility.

If such persons urge, in defence of their extravagant behaviour, their dereliction of their trades and daily labours, and their assumption of the priest's office, a particular CALL, from Heaven itself, louder than reaches the ears of others, let them before they believe themselves, or persuade others, produce, as a credential of their commission, a miracle. If they find themselves utterly unable to do this, let them return to the workshop and warehouse, renounce the *deceitful* spirit, and evince their attainment of the true, by humility, charity, modesty, and obedience to lawful superiors; by a *study to be quiet*, and an attention to their own business.

From such practices, and such persons as I have alluded to, has arisen much of the disgrace which has fallen on true and laudable *enthusiasm*, or that wisdom which is infused into the pure, gentle, and charitable heart from above. False enthusiasm should be discouraged, that *true* religion may grow and flourish; as the weed should be plucked up, to give room for the wholesome plant to strike root, and expand itself in foliage and blossoms, and produce good fruit in abundance.

SECTION XXXIX.

Of being RIGHTEOUS overmuch.

IT seems to be very doubtful, whether the scriptural phrase of being *righteous overmuch*, signifies that sort of excess which methodists and fanatics are apt to indulge. I am rather induced to believe, that it means an extreme rigour in exacting from *others* an unerring rectitude. "Be not righteous overmuch; why shouldst "thou destroy *thyself?*"* That is, "Establish not, by "thy severity, a rule so strict as must, if put in force

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* Eccles. vii. 16.

"against thyself, involve thee, imperfect as thou art, in "destruction." The prohibition seems to me to quadrate with the old observation, that justice in the extreme is extreme injustice*.

There are other interpretations of the words at least as probable as that which confines it to the over-sanctity of the methodist or bigot.

The ingenious and pious Dr. Trapp has taken the words in the latter sense, and written, with great force of argument, against the extravagances of methodism. Perhaps the words of his text did not properly authorize him in deriving the doctrine from them which he has laid down; but whether they did or not, I think he had reason on his side, when he endeavoured to explode all superstitious excesses which are subversive of true religion, injurious to society, and painful to the deluded individual†.

Philosophers, by the light of nature, discovered, in the earliest ages, the wisdom of avoiding extremes; and no precepts are more common than those which recommend the golden mediocrity. These were undoubtedly suggested by actual experience, and a careful study of the human constitution. If they are just and proper, when applied to philosophy, there is every reason to think them equally so, when applied to religion, which

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[*] *Summum jus, summa injuria.*

[†] "But let it be remembered, that no virtue has any *blameable* "EXTREME in it, till it contradicts the general end of religion, till "it hinders the RESTORATION of the *divine Image* in us, or "makes us less fit to appear among the inhabitants of heaven. "*Abstinence, temperance, mortification of the senses and passions*, "can have NO EXCESS till they hinder the purification of the soul, "and make the body less useful and subservient to it. *Charity* "can have no EXCESS till it contradicts that *love* which we are to "have in heaven, till it goes *beyond* the command of loving our "neighbour as we *love* ourselves, and till it forgets that our own "life is to be preserved." *Answer to Dr.* TRAPP's *Discourse.*

is the perfection of philosophy. Excess, in the very name, implies culpability, even when the things in which it appears are of a virtuous and laudable nature.

So that whoever advances his virtues beyond the line of rectitude, errs no less than he who stops, at an equal interval, on this side of it. Yet, at the same time, I must observe, that there is something far more noble and generous in errors of excess than of defect; and the virulence which has been shewn in refuting the poor methodist, who has been tormenting himself* with superfluous austerities, seems to me to arise from a want of good-nature and charity, far more criminal than the mistaken discipline of a zealous devotee.

That part of the methodists who are sincere in their rigid self-denial, and in all the active and passive virtues of their persuasion, are certainly objects of kindness and compassion, rather than of severe animadversion.

The church, and the protestant dissenters, it appears, teach the doctrine of grace; a doctrine which, I believe, the methodists consider as of the first moment; and for the sake of attending to which with more earnestness, they seceded from the church and meeting-house to the tabernacle. Their preachers, they found, were used to dwell upon that subject, more than on any others; and with a degree of vehemence not usual or approved by men of more learning, moderation, and humility. They were caught by the sound, and taught to hate both the church and all regular ministers with a hatred truly unchristian. The church and the ministers†, it seems, were not sufficiently holy for their purpose. The church and the ministers did not preach the gospel in its purity; and neither its doctrine nor its discipline were sufficiently strict and severe.

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* The poor *Heautontimorumenos*, with his pale emaciated figure, is certainly not an object of ridicule, and ought, at least, to be *forgiven*, by the plump pluralist and dignitary gorging the tithe pig, and washing it down with the choicest wines of Portugal and France.

† When these become the mere tools of statesmen, (vide Section III.) all religious people are offended, and one of the pillars of the state is shaken.

The dissemination of such ideas may answer the ends of self-appointed leaders, who wish to increase their importance, by drawing a multitude after them. Accusation will generally be heard with attention. Pretensions to superior holiness is one of the most successful means of deceit. The multitude are attracted by these, and a thousand other arts, co-operating with the natural tendency which they feel to superstition and fanaticism. They become self-tormentors; lose most of the comforts, and neglect many of the duties of life.

In the church, their favourite doctrine of grace *ought to be* inculcated in the manner which both reason, scripture, and experience best approve; for the doctrine of grace is most fully declared to be the doctrine of the church of England; and if the ministers are reluctant to preach it in all its force, it is from a fear of falling into the sin and disgrace of *overmuch righteousness*. It is the humble endeavour of my treatise on this subject, to stimulate preachers to enlarge on the doctrine of grace; and by those means to bring back the numerous sheep who have strayed from their flock. There is the sort of food in which the sheep will shew that they delight, if the shepherds will but bring it forth; and indeed there is little doubt but that most of them do, on some occasions; but if the sheep hunger and thirst after more than they receive, the good shepherd will not fail to open all the stores with which the scriptures abundantly supply him.

With respect to doctrine, the over-righteous Christian, as he is now called, will thus have no cause to complain of defect in the church; and with respect to moral discipline, it is very certain that self-denial, mortification, fasting, active beneficence, and all Christian perfection, is taught by the church and her ministers, with great force of argument and authority. Every Christian may carry the moral discipline of his religion to whatever lengths his conscience or inclination may urge him.

It must be confessed, that such is the moderation of the church and her pastors in the PRESENT AGE, that the duties which they teach are not urged with that unnatural rigour which precludes the rational enjoyment of life. It is a cheerful church, and for that reason the more estimable. It requires no excessive austerity. It aims at assisting poor erring mortals in overcoming their weakness and misery; but it does not add to them, by requiring the sacrifice of health, ease, peace, society, cheerfulness, and innocent gaiety. It does not condemn those, with whom it cannot agree in opinion, with uncharitable severity. It is gentle and candid; it is accommodated to such a creature as man, forever aiming at good, but, from weakness, continually relapsing into some degree of evil. It does not, like the severe system of the over-righteous, inflame and aggravate the wounds of its patients, but, with lenient balsamics, assuages their anguish*.

And if the over-righteous object that regularly-bred ministers want vehemence and earnestness, I affirm that the objection cannot be *universally* well-founded. Men, having various degrees of talents, and various degrees of sensibility, will have a correspondent variety in their modes of delivery. The lively by nature, with very little sense of religion, may be animated in their discourses; the dull by nature, with a meaning very honest and pious, will be poor orators. And it always happens, in a very large body of men, that some are idle and irreligious; though circumstances may have led them to assume a profession where carelessness and impiety are doubly culpable. But such is the present state of human nature. He who demands more perfection than experience has ever yet known, is unreasonable and *over-righteous*. If some men have less pretension, and less vehemence than those who are called the OVER-RIGHTEOUS, they have probably less hypocrisy, less folly, and less spiritual arrogance. Over-righteousness, with all its pretensions to humility, is the parent as well as the child of pride.

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* By the CHURCH I wish to be understood all those who are united to Christ by the Holy Ghost, wherever they dwell, and by whatever *denomination* they are distinguished. The WORLD, in the scriptural sense, consists of all who are not so united.

After all, let us remember that there is an *under-righteousness* (if I may use the term) as well as an over-righteousness; and that mankind are much apter to err from defect than excess. While hypocrisy and fanaticism are avoided, let us not, in the present times, be alarmed at danger from excessive piety.

SECTION XL.

All extravagant and selfish Pretensions to the Spirit to be anxiously avoided, as they proceed from and cherish Pride, and are frequently accompanied with Immorality.

OSTENTATIOUSLY to pretend to greater portions of the Spirit than others, is alone a very unfavourable symptom, as it is a presumptive proof of two wants, not compatible with the Spirit's benignant influence: the want of humility, and the want of charity. It is no wonder, therefore, that those who have made such pretensions, have disgraced them by the wickedness of their lives; and have induced ill-judging men hastily to consider the whole doctrine of divine assistance as a mere delusion.

Hypocrites, in fanatical times, when the appearance of extraordinary piety was conducive to advancement in wealth and honours, were sure to go farther in their pretensions, than the modesty of true professors could permit or excuse: but that deceitfulness of heart which produces hypocrisy, leads to all other bad conduct; and religion has been disgraced by the singular profligacy of ostentatious professors.

Knaves of the very worst kind, who have no other object than to avail themselves of the credulity of others, are likely at all times to put on a cloak and a mask, which may render them externally respectable, and facilitate their purposes of deceit. Nothing seduces the ignorant and unexperienced so easily as the appearance of extraordinary sanctity; and nothing has been more frequently assumed, for the accomplishment of ambitious and lucrative designs. When these designs have been accomplished, the cloak and the mask have been thrown aside, as useless incumbrances, and the villain has stood forth in his proper shape and colour.

Men of weak heads and warm hearts have proceeded to the most extravagant lengths in pretensions to sanctity; and at the same time, from the want of solid virtue, have fallen into deplorable sins. Their sins derived additional deformity in the eyes of the people, from the contrast of assumed sanctity; and the world was ready to exclaim that all religion must be vain, if, in men who display so much of it, it contributes so little to wisdom and virtue.

Great sinners, unwilling to tread the rugged road of virtue, have thought it an easier and pleasanter mode of avoiding the consequences of their enormities, to persuade themselves of sudden conversions, and peculiar favour from heaven; and to compensate for inward impurity by outward sanctity, and for disobedience in things essential, by intemperate zeal in things indifferent, formal, and merely ostentatious.

Thus spiritual pride, want of charity, hypocrisy, knavery, folly, and extreme wickedness, have given rise to extraordinary pretensions to the Spirit, and verified the observation, that the wickedest of mankind have been among those who displayed the appearance of goodness and piety in the EXTREME.

" The gradation has been," (says Dr. Trapp,) righte-
" teous overmuch in practice—righteous overmuch in
" practice and doctrine—immoral and profligate in both;
" and this still with pretensions to *extraordinary* mea-
" sures of the *Holy Spirit*."

But to what should a conviction of this truth lead the sober Christian? Certainly not to deny the doctrine of supernatural assistance, which he finds in the gospel; but to avoid all extravagance of pretension, all boasting, all over-righteousness, all preference of himself to others, on account of spiritual gifts, lest he also should find himself deceived and a deceiver.

The religion of Christ is of a retired and reserved nature. Its most important transactions are in the recesses of the heart, and in the closet. It loves not noise nor ostentation. Let him, therefore, who wishes to know whether he really has the Spirit, examine whether his virtues and good dispositions abound in retirement, and without the least parade whatever, or the smallest applause or reward of men. If he does good privately, and avoids the eyes of admirers, I think he may entertain an humble confidence that he has the *favour of* God. He has, in consequence, a source of joy within him, which no man taketh away. He has the bread of life, and *feeds on it in his heart by faith with thanksgiving*. He is silently and unostentatiously happy, neither courting the notice of the world, nor regarding its unjust censure. He is particularly careful, that no ill-treatment shall cause him to violate the law of charity. His chief concern is to bear and yet forbear; to *be* rather than to *seem* good.

SECTION XLI.

Affected Sanctity, Demureness, Canting, Sourness, Censoriousness, ignorant and illiterate Preaching, no marks of a State of Grace, but contribute to bring the whole Doctrine of Divine Energy into Contempt, and to diffuse Infidelity.

RELIGION is lovely. Her voice is melodious, and her aspect delightful. How has she been deformed! She has been taught to utter jargon with the hoarse croaking of the portentous raven, or to scream with the terrific howlings of the bird of night. Her face has been changed from the face of an angel to a gorgon's head, surrounded with snakes. She has been rendered a bugbear, terrifying all who approach her, instead of a gentle nursing mother, inviting wretched mortals to her fostering bosom, by the tenderest blandishments of maternal love.

Men of natural sense, improved by a learned education, and polished by all the elegancies of cultivated life, have turned from her, thus disguised as she appears, with disgust and horror. They have devoted themselves to a seducing philosophy, and left religion thus disfigured, to the gross vulgar, whom they erroneously conceived were naturally attached to the horrors of a cruel and gloomy, as well as a silly, superstition.

Is it not desirable to vindicate Christianity from such dishonour? to shew that her most important doctrine, the doctrine of divine energy, leads to every disposition that is gentle, amiable, and beneficent; that it exalts, refines, and mollifies the human bosom; and while it kindles a lively and pleasant hope of future felicity, improves every real enjoyment of the present life? Such a representation, and it certainly is a just one, must invite every man, who feels duly for himself or others, within the Christian pale.

The spirit is a spirit of truth, and therefore must be adverse to all affectation of sanctity, all studied severity of aspect and demeanour, intended only to excite external respect, and to impress on the spectators, often for the sake of interest, as well as from vanity, an idea of spiritual pre-eminence. The Spirit is a loving spirit, and therefore very unlike that of the sour, censorious pretenders, who condemn all innocent amusements, and think none capable of divine favour but themselves, and those who entertain their sentiments on points perfectly indifferent in the sight of God, and of every reasonable man. The Spirit is a spirit of wisdom, which implies a due degree of knowledge and ability for every undertaking we voluntary engage in, and therefore cannot approve the preaching of illiterate persons, who are unacquainted, not only with the languages in which the scriptures are written, but often with their own; who are fitter to be catechumens than catechists; to sit at the feet of Gamaliel, than to usurp his chair. Learning may not be requisite in the pious hearer, but is certainly so in every one who assumes the office of an instructor. He is not an honest man, who professes and is paid to instruct others, without having exerted himself to the utmost to procure a competent store of knowledge. The operations of the Holy Spirit, accompanying his endeavours, may make a good Christian in his private capacity: may give him faith and knowledge sufficient for his salvation; but they do not, since the time of the apostles, bestow a knowledge of languages, or qualify ALONE, without the aid of human learning, for a TEACHER of theology.

The annals of suicide, if any such there were, and the registers of Bedlam, might bear witness to the mischiefs caused by fanatical mechanics, with strong passions and imaginations, but of feeble and narrow intellects, wildly haranguing weak and aged men and women on their lost state, on their danger of eternal damnation, and a thousand other most awful matters, which at once puzzle the understandings, and dismay the hearts of the deluded multitude. True Christianity shudders at the sufferings of well meaning devotees, wantonly inflicted by ignorant zealots, seeking self-importance, and gratifying the pride of their hearts, as *leaders* of a wretched tribe, whom noise and high pretensions collect easily in every populous city, and in every poor neighbourhood, where the necessity of constant manual employment for the means of subsistence precludes all contemplation, and the improvement of judgment that might result from it.

In compassion to these people, who deserve every assistance, because they certainly intend every thing that is good, though they do and suffer great evil, through defect of judgment, I wish the regular clergy, both of the established and dissenting church, to feed them with the food in which they delight—the heavenly manna, the doctrine of grace. There is no doubt but that many of them do so occasionally; but I submit it to them whether it ought not to be a leading and principal topic in every discourse inculcating morality. I beg leave to suggest that EVANGELICAL preaching, in which the doctrine of divine energy must always make a very considerable part, would keep their congregations from wandering after men, who have no other qualification for preaching but zeal, real or pretended; zeal without knowledge, or a knowledge confined, superficial, and unaccompanied with general charity or sound discretion. With all their defects, they do, however, preach the doctrine of grace. The people know this to be the genuine doctrine of the gospel, and therefore they flock by tens of thousands to hear it, regardless of the barbarism of the self-appointed orator, who leaves the loom and the last for the pulpit.

The pearl of great price they estimate highly, however rudely it may be set; but how much more would they prize it, if it were set, adequately to its immense value, in the purest gold, by the hand of a master? If men of sound and extensive learning, of true taste and eloquence, were to recommend it, with all the beauties of proper language, the field-preacher would rant in solitude and the tabernacle* would be as empty as most of the parish churches in London. To them I refer the inquirer, who wishes to know how little the most decent and studied discourses on morality, or practical religion, avail to attract the people. Let him leave a while his books and library, and read the volume of real life. We have had enough of words, enough of systems, enough of controversy; let us study and teach what is really and efficiently useful to the mass of the people, what improves human nature, renders life as comfortable as the condition of humanity will admit, and opens a pleasing prospect, (when life must be relinquished,) beyond the grave.

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* When one sees the multitudes that throng certain tabernacles, where very weak men hold forth with scarcely any apparent recommendation but effrontery, one is almost tempted to say on the occasion, "God hath chosen the foolish things of this world " to confound the wise; and God hath chosen the weak things of " the world to confound the mighty, that no flesh might glory in " his presence." 1 Cor. i. 27.

These things, says the haughty court divine, are calculated for the meridian of the vulgar. But let us hear *Erasmus:* "*Hæc, inquam,* PLEBEIA, *si præstarent pro suâ sorte principes, si in concionibus inculcarent sacerdotes, si pueris instillarent ludimagistri, potius quam* ERUDITA ILLA***; *non sic perpetuis pene bellis tumultuaretur undique res Christianâ, non tam, insano studio per fas nefasque congerendi divitias ferverent omnia; non tot litibus ubique perstreperent sacra pariter ac profana. Denique non titulo tantum et ceremoniis differemus ab his qui* Christi Philosophiam *non profitentur.*"

SECTION XLII.

Bishop Lavington's *Opinion, respecting the Extravagancies and Follies of fanatical Preachers, and Pretenders to the Spirit.*

" WHEREVER I find great stress laid upon " some imaginary, insignificant, or unintelligible pecu- " liarities; the word of God turned into a conjuring- " book; the divine ordinances either lightly esteemed, " or imputed to the devil; good works either under- " valued or trodden under foot; wild-fire dangerously " tossed about, instead of that light which came down " from heaven; puffing pretentions to extraordinary " revelations, inspirations, usurping the name of the " Holy One; with personal conferences with God, face " to face; enthusiastic ranters, comparing themselves " with prophets and apostles, if not with Christ himself; " the most wild and extravagant behaviour, the phren- " zies of a disturbed brain, or deluded imagination, the " effects of fits, of a weak head, or DISEASED BODY, all " turned into so many tests and marks of saintship; " the SPIRIT OF PRIDE AND VANITY possessing the " LEADERS; a spirit of ENVY, RANCOUR, broils, and im- " placable animosities, dashing each other in pieces; a

“ spirit of bitterness and uncharitableness towards the “ REST OF MANKIND; a progress through *immorality*, “ *scepticism*, infidelity, atheism, through spiritual desertions, DESPAIR, and MADNESS, made the gate of perfection; an IMAGINARY *new-birth* to be brought to pass “ by means of REAL TORTURES, of some of the most “ exquisite pangs and sufferings that can affect human “ nature;—I say, where these are found, and many “ more equally horrible, one may easily discern a wide “ difference between such a *dispensation* and GENUINE “ RELIGION; as well as the bungling hands that are “ substituting the former in the place of the other. One “ may easily see what strangers such inconsistent ramblers must be to the true devotion, as well as the “ COMFORTS of a sedate, composed piety; to a firm belief of our Maker and Redeemer, and a constant reliance upon Providence; to a steady course of sincere, “ habitual, and unaffected religion; to the cherishing of “ a warm love of God in the heart, and well-tempered “ zeal for the truths of his inspired word; and all this “ PROVED by the *love of our neighbour;* to a general “ observance and attendance on the MEANS OF GRACE, “ and a well-grounded hope of glory.”

From the wretched follies of fanatics, the mind turns with complacency to the gentle benignant Spirit which guided a bishop Wilson, a Watts, a Doddridge, a Nelson and a Horne. . Such men do honour to the doctrine of grace, and rescue it from the contempt under which it has fallen through the extravagance of weak devotees, and the *unhappy ingenuity* of scholastic theologists, explaining away, to shew their skill, the strongest expressions of holy scripture.

SECTION XLIII.

Pride the great Obstacle to the general Reception of the Gospel of Grace.

A PROUD, turbulent, and vindictive spirit is utterly incompatible with the spirit of Christianity; but a proud, turbulent, and vindictive spirit constitutes what is called, in the world, a man of honour; and who can aspire at the distinctions and rewards which the world has to bestow, without aspiring at the character of a man of honour—without zealously maintaining it, in defiance of all which the scriptures have taught us to consider as the WILL OF GOD? No wonder, then, that the genuine gospel the SPIRIT, which is first *pure* then *peaceable*, gentle, and easy to be entreated, should be utterly neglected by those who are more solicitous about the opinion of a few weak and wicked mortals like themselves, than about all that Christianity promises or threatens; who regard neither God nor man, when their own *self-estimation* is in the smallest degree depreciated. SUBMISSION of the temper and understanding, which is necessary for the reception of that EVIDENCE of Christianity which the Holy Ghost affords, is considered as contemptible meanness, by those who are full of themselves, and live only to *flatter*, for the sake of being re-flattered, in the circles of self-idolizing vanity.

The doctrine of a participation with the divine nature, conceded by Heaven to the faithful and pious of *low degree*, is highly mortifying to those who think the perfection of human nature consists in civil nobility, in blood, or in titles conferred by an earthly monarch. He who shares the divine nature, who is favoured with an emanation of Deity, is truly ennobled; for his very nature is exalted above the ordinary rank of humanity; and according to the gospel, he is become the living temple of the Holy Ghost. That a poor man, such as were the apostles, and such as are many true Christians in the present day, should possess a nature raised above whatever earthly honours can bestow, is a doctrine offensive to all who have been taught to consider, as the *chief good of man*, the gratification of the *pride of life*.

Scholars also, deep mathematicians, metaphysicians, and logicians, feel a sentiment of scorn, when they are told that a plain, simple, humble peasant, whose mind is rightly disposed, may receive a portion of divine illumination, which shall contribute more to sound wisdom, and consequently to happiness, than all their minute and laborious disquisitions, Philosophy, towering, like Icarus, on wings made by the art of man, to the clouds, looks down with contempt on Religion, who associates with ignorant wretches, distinguished by humility of rank as much as by humility of disposition. Philosophy leaves the company of a personage so mean, and frequently passes from a contempt of her, to downright hatred and enmity*.

Thus pride is a chief obstacle to the reception of the doctrine of evangelical grace. Pride blinds the eyes of the understanding against the evidence of the Holy Ghost. Pride causes *hardness of heart*, a quality the most odious to the divine, and most injurious to the human nature. It teaches us to behold our inferiors, not only as not of the same flesh and blood with ourselves*; not only as little entitled to the comforts and advantages of this life; but as unworthy of partaking with us in the divine favour, and the happiness of a glorified state. The doctrine of grace is considered by the men of the world as too great a *leveller*, to be freely admitted consistently with their own ideas of exclusive privileges, or of worldly policy†. It must therefore be *cried down*, wherever their authority can prevail‡.

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* The gentile or genteel philosopher too often hears with pain such sentiments of Christianity, as those of Erasmus in the following passage:

" *Existimo puram illam Christi* PHILOSOPHIAM *non aliundè*
" *fœlicius hauriri quam ex evangelicis libris, quàm ex apostolicis*
" *literis; in quibus, si quis* PIE philosophetur, ORANS *magis quàm*
" ARGUMENTANS, *nihil esse, quod ad hominis felicitatem, nihil*
" *quod ad ullam hujus vitæ functionem pertineat, quod in his non sit*
" *traditum, discussum, et absolutum.*" ERASMUS.

But surely their objection does it honour. It shews that the doctrine is favourable to the whole human race; that it is not narrow, partial, unjust; but, like the Author of all good, whence it flows, accepts not the persons of men, neither regards the transient and petty distinctions of rank, but shews favour to the meek and lowly, and to all that are good and true of heart, whether in the palace or in the cottage.

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* ——" Non *animos et corpora nostrâ*
" *Materiâ constare putat, paribusque Elementis,*" Juv.

What! cries her grace—are then the *swinish* herd
Made of such flesh and blood as we?—absurd!
Are souls like ours to vulgar wretches given?
I would not keep such company in Heaven.

This spirit of pride is apt to conceive the multitude, the *canaille*, that is, the poor, to whom the Gospel was preached, as *only* FOOD FOR POWDER.

† Yet they should remember, that death is a greater leveller, and one whom no policy or power can escape.

‡ *How can ye* BELIEVE, *which receive honour one of another?* John, v. 44.

Men lean on reeds, when they rely solely on each other for happiness and honour. Indeed, what real honour can one poor lost creature receive from another, who is exactly in the same condition, if without GRACE?

Whatsoever ye do, do all to the GLORY *of God.* 1 Cor. 10.

Take comfort, ye poor and despised brethren; for God, by his gospel, has promised to bestow on you riches and honours, durable as they are solid, and such as no earthly power can confer or alienate: and would to Heaven that they, who *trust* in worldly riches and honours, could but behold it in a true light, their real poverty and dishonourable state, when destitute of grace, or, in other words, the *favour* of the Almighty SOVEREIGN, the Lord of Lords, and the King of Kings*.

SECTION XLIV.

The universal Prevalence of the Holy Spirit—the Genuine Grace of the Gospel—highly conducive to the Happiness of CIVIL SOCIETY, *as well as of Individuals.*

IT always appeared to me an absurdity, that men should act in their corporate capacity on such principles as, in their individual and private state, they would deem profligate. Public acts are the acts of private men; and wherever public acts are immoral, it may be concluded, that those who sanctioned them in a body, are, as separate members, insincere friends of virtue, and hypocritical professors of religion. Offensive war, and treacherous violation of the most solemn treaties, could never be countenanced by whole nations of Christians, if the individuals were actuated by the sentiments of true Christianity.

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* *Nescit religio nostra personas accipere, nec conditiones hominum, sed animos inspicit singulorum. Servum ac nobilem de moribus pronunciat. Sola apud Deum libertas est non servire peccatis. Summa apud Deus est nobilitas clarum esse virtutibus.*

Hieronymus ad Celantiam, *Ep.* 14.

Ευγενεια δε η της εικονος τηρησις, ϗ προς το αρχετυπον εξομοιωσις, ην εργαζεται λογος ϗ αρετη.

GREG. NAZ. in Orat. 11.

Ευγειαν δε λεγω, ου χην οι πολλοι νομιζουσιν· απαγε· αλλ' ην ευσεβεια χαρακτήριζει ϗ τροπος, ϗ η προς το πρωτον αγαθον ανοδος.

Idem, in Orat. 23.

It has been said, that we are not to look for the effects of Christianity in national acts or public councils. Why not? are they not men and Christians, who perform national acts, and compose public councils? When a man gives a vote for any public measure, or advises the supreme magistrate, does he drop the Christian in the voter or the counsellor? Common sense revolts at the idea of the same men's renouncing their identity, splitting themselves into several characters, and acting in one inconsistently with their most serious duties and solemn engagements in another, which, at the same time, they profess zealously to support. Misery unutterable arises to the human race, from this duplicity. The sanctity assumed in one character throws a false glare and varnish over the villainy practised in the other, and makes it pass current by authority.

A man who is a real Christian, not a political conformist only, will be a Christian in his public conduct, as well as in his private. He will be a Christian statesman and member of parliament, no less than a Christian father, husband and neighbour.

Now, no man is a Christian in name only, when his Christianity arises from the operation and evidence of the Holy Ghost. His very heart is converted. The whole man is renewed. He is no longer a proud, selfish, cruel being, greedily seeking his OWN fancied gratification, at the expence of other men's happiness, but guided in all his conduct by the sentiment of love. The law of kindness governs all his actions. His wisdom is gentle; and he uses power, if he possesses it, in imitation of the all-powerful being above, in diffusing blessings to all who are within the sphere of his influence.

Suppose, then, kings, and rulers of all descriptions, under the benign operation of the Christian spirit, and consequently firm believers and *defenders* of Christianity. Unnecessary wars immediately cease. The prophecies of Isaiah are accomplished. Swords and spears are converted into pruning-hooks and plough-shares. The lion dandles the lamb, without an inclination to devour it.

The people, feeling the blessings of such government, and actuated by the gentle affections of charity, become cordially attached to it, and to each other. Universal tranquility reigns. The whole society, both the governed and governing, co-operate in adding to the comforts and diminishing the evils of life; piety to God, and love to man, display the vital efficacy of the gospel, and prove that it is not a cunningly devised fable, invented by priests for the support of kingly power, but the lively energy of God, actuating the human bosom, and restoring man to that perfection of nature by the second Adam, which was lost by the disobedience of the first in Paradise.

The truest patriotism, therefore, is to revive or diffuse genuine Christianity; to teach men to seek and to find the grace of God through Christ Jesus. This is the philosophy which should be taught from the chairs of our universities, and the pulpits of our churches. It would not then fall to the illiterate and fanciful mechanic, who often disgraces it, not only by ignorance of all other science, but too often by a violence of passion and malignity of temper, which seem to evince that he does not possess what he so warmly recommends to his audience.

Christianity is so far from unfitting man for society, as the calumniators have said, that its graces and virtues are peculiarly social. It teaches every thing that is just and kind. It is the false, mistaken, hypocritical, and, above all, the POLITICAL Christianity, which has been the cause of mischief and misery. This has ever been used as a cloak for maliciousness. But where the Spirit of God, the living gospel of immediate grace, goes hand in hand with the written gospel, there every thing lovely, friendly, and beneficial, is the natural and unavoidable result. The root is good, and the fruit delicious and salubrious in the highest degree. May the tree spread its umbrageous branches over the land, and all the people take refuge and seek solace under its expanded foliage! The throne that is established in righteousness is fixed on the rock of ages; and the people who have the Lord for their God and King, shall never know the woes of captivity and desolation.

Christian philosophy purifies society by purifying the fountain of all human actions, the heart of man. Heathen philosophy often consists of nothing more than *fine sayings*, pleasing to the imagination, but leaving the heart uninfluenced and the conduct unreformed.

Some of those heathens, who wrote the finest morality, it is well known, practised, and even obliquely recommended with all the charms of wit and eloquence, vices which degrade man below the brute.

SECTION XLV.

Of Holiness—its true Meaning, and absolute Necessity.

LET a man's mind be holy, and he will not doubt one moment of the truth of Christianity. It is not enough that it be learned or sagacious; it must be holy; and then the more learned or the more sagacious, so much the more firmly will its belief be fixed, and so much the better enabled to extend the faith. Bacon, Boyle, Locke, Newton, Milton, Addison, Lord Chief Justice Hale, possessed intellects as vigorous as ever fell to the lot of human beings; but they were educated *piously* as well as learnedly, according to the manners of their times. They lived *holily;* the Spirit of Grace took early possession of their hearts, and they became not only believers but defenders of the faith. Not to their learning, but to their holiness, be the glory. They saw God by the eye of faith, not of philosophy.

There is one qualification, without which we shall never be admitted to the favour of God, or to celestial felicity in the mansions of future glory, and it is HOLINESS: without this, we read, no man shall see the Lord. *Follow* PEACE *with* ALL *men, and* HOLINESS, *without which, no man shall see the Lord.*[*]

No words can be plainer, and more express than these. A question naturally arises in the mind of every thinking man, in what consists this quality, which is indispensably necessary to securing the beatific privilege of enjoying the divine presence? What is holiness?

The excellent Joseph Mede informs us, that "*sanc-*"*tity*, or holiness, imports *discrimination*,—or distinc-" tion from other things by way of exaltation and pre-" eminence."[†]

God himself is originally, absolutely, and essentially HOLY; man, only by communication.

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[*] Heb. xii. 14.

[†] Thus Kimchi, on Isaiah, lvi. 2.

" קדוש שבה להבדילי משאר הימים׃"

" To *sanctify* the sabbath, is to *separate* it from other days."

" כי כו כל לשיו קדושה הקא עניו הבדלו מאחד במעלה׃"

" Because all words of *sanctity* import a thing *separated* from " other things by way of pre-eminence or excellency."

JOSEPH MEDE.

Holiness I therefore understand to be that state, in which God vouchsafes to man his HOLY SPIRIT, and *discriminates* him from those who, rejecting his offers of grace, presumptuously adhere to the world and its vanities; who neglect religion entirely, and who live without God in the world, despisers of his grace. To be holy, is to be refined, by the Spirit of God, from the corruptions of the world; to be *separated* from sin and impurity, like the metal from base alloy.

He, therefore, who would *see the Lord*, must, by *obedience*, seek the manifestation of the Spirit, by *prayer* obtain the divine assistance, and thus be admitted to a participation of the divine nature: *according as his* DIVINE POWER *hath given unto us all things that pertain unto life and godliness, through the knowledge of him that hath called us to glory and virtue; whereby are given unto us exceeding great and precious promises, that by these we might be* PARTAKERS OF THE DIVINE NATURE, having escaped the CORRUPTION that is in the world through lust*.

The happy state of holiness constitutes the true dignity of human nature. This at once purifies and elevates it. The man who possesses it, enjoys this world with calm complacency, while he rises superior to it, and hopes for a better in reversion. He acts rightly, yet never rigidly; he always tempers justice with kindness and mercy; his whole behaviour is gentle, flowing from an internal principle of benevolence. The fear of God and the love of man operate on his heart as the main springs of all his activity. To express his conduct in scripture language, he does justice, loves mercy, and walks humbly with his God.

Behaviour thus amiable and beneficent is the surest proof of holiness. Great pretensions, sanctimonious deportment, a rigid observance of external ceremonies, and a pertinacious adherence to particular doctrines, are all consistent with an unholy state, with self-deceit, and with hypocrisy. But he who is kindly affectioned to his fellow-creatures with brotherly love; he who is *unostentatiously* pious, and displays the fruits of the Spirit by good works, he can entertain little doubt of SEEING GOD; seeing the truth of his word, and enjoying his presence in the living temple of his heart, thus consecrated by the influence of the Holy Ghost.

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* 2 Pet. i. 4.

A delightful serenity attends that state of holiness, which arises from an humble confidence in God; such as would render it devoutly to be wished for, if its consequences extended only to the pleasurable enjoyment of this life. It causes our journey to resemble a passage through those charming countries, where the air is genially soft, the sky clear, and the prospect variegated with every beauty of nature. The cold, shivering, self-dependent mortal, who walks through the world all solitary, who has not God for his friend and companion, may be compared to the forlorn savage, prowling for prey far from the solar beam, in the regions near the pole. How would he rejoice in the warm sunshine and sweet serenity of an Italian climate!

SECTION XLVI.

Of a good Heart.

THE most desirable treasure which a human being can possess, whether he has regard to his own happiness or to those around him, is a GOOD HEART. In every situation, and under all circumstances, this will furnish a store of sweets which the wicked cannot obtain; and delicious though it is, would not relish, so vitiated is their taste. A good heart communicates liberally the pleasures it enjoys; blessed or blessing in every emotion.

But what constitutes a good heart? The grace of God operating upon it. The mild, gentle, healing spirit of the gospel; or, to use the language of scripture, the UNCTION of the HOLY GHOST, mollifying its hardness, and preserving it from corruption*. This it is which forms a good heart, and a good heart is a land of Canaan to itself, a land flowing with milk and honey.

All the irascible passions are, in their excess, diabolical. They are the fruitful sources of misery. They would unparadise the garden of Eden, and turn the cheerful light of Heaven into gloomy darkness, like the shadow in the valley of death. There is in the world much natural evil; there are pains, and diseases enough, to wean the heart from the immoderate love of it; but none of them are productive of wretchedness so great and difficult of cure as the malignant passions of pride, envy and revenge. These estrange man from man, and convert the haunts of human creatures into dens of of foxes and wolves. Cheats, calumniators, robbers, murderers, in all their variety and degrees of flagitiousness, are characters naturally flowing from hearts unsoftened, unenlightened, unhallowed by the Spirit of Grace.

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* Beautiful is the description which Lactantius gives of the effect of Christianity in meliorating the disposition. I will transcribe his words:

"*Da mihi virum, qui sit iracundus, maledicus, effrænatus: paucissimis* Dei verbis *tam placidum quam ovem reddam. Da cupidum, avarum, tenacem: jam tibi eum liberalem dabo et pecuniam suam plenis manibus largientem. Da crudelem et sanguinis appetentem; jam in veram clementiam furor ille mutabitur. Da injustum, insipientem, peccatorem: continuo et æquus et prudens et innocens erit. Uno enim Lavacro malitia omnis abolebitur. Tanta* DIVINÆ SAPIENTIÆ *vis est; ut in hominis pectus diffusa, matrem delictorum, stultitiam, uno semel impetu expellat; ad quod efficiendum, non mercede, non libris, non lucubrationibus opus est. Gratis ista fiunt, facilè, cito; modo pateant aures et* PECTUS SAPIENTIAM SITIAT: *num quis hæc philosophorum aut unquam præstitit aut præstare potuit?*" LACT. *Inst* Lib. ii. C. 26.

Thus appears the superiority of CHRISTIAN PHILOSOPHY, in a *moral* view, over all other philosophy. Lactantius had been a heathen philosopher, and speaks experimentally.

But behold the Christian. Gentleness and sweetness beam from his eyes, and illuminate his countenance with a mild lustre. Good humour predominates in all his demeanour. He has no concealed rage rankling in his bosom; he has no sinister and selfish views, under a studied openness of countenance. He converses with a generous frankness. His bosom is transparent. You are perfectly safe with him. He will serve you, if possible, as well as please you; but he will never injure you purposely, or give you the smallest pain. He feels complacency in all the good he sees around him, and delights in augmenting it. His treasure is within him. His interest is in Heaven. His ambition is for objects above the world; so that nothing in it is of value enough, in his estimation, to tempt him to resign the tranquility of innocence, to renounce the pleasures of a friendly and benevolent disposition. He has all the ingenuous simplicity of the infantine age, and you delight in him, as in the harmless babe, who sports around you, and expresses his pains and pleasures according to the dictates of uncorrupted nature.

Such is man, when his natural asperities are smoothed, and his inborn bitterness sweetened by the benign operation of celestial influence. Compared with the mere natural man, he is an angel. Is it not desirable thus to raise human nature, and thus to improve society; thus to render the earthly existence almost an anticipation of what our imperfect imaginations picture of the heavenly? Heathen philosophy cannot effect it. Heathen philosophy is confined to a few, in comparison with the myriads that compose the great mass of human beings: who weary themselves in pursuit of happiness on this terraqueous globe. The experiment has been tried by the philosophers of all ages, and failed. But religion can effect it. Yet what religion? A religion founded on historical faith, and heathen mythology? No; it must be a vital religion—a divine influence on the heart, which is plainly promised and announced in the glad tidings of the gospel. This is the true *euangelion*, or GOOD NEWS*, to the human race. It is authenticated by the written gospel, and there is a witness within us which renders it unquestionable. Happy they who have obeyed the voice which commands, saying, "My son, give me thy HEART!"† When the heart is devoted to Christ, the understanding will make no resistance to his doctrines, but humbly acknowledge the most inexplicable mysteries to be above, yet not contrary to reason.

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* What NEWS was it to mankind to tell them what Pythagoras, Socraties, Epictetus, Cicero, and many others, had told them before—the expediency of moral virtue, justice, temperance, fortitude? The *glad tidings* were the announcing the comfort and assistance of the Holy Ghost, redemption, pardon, peace, and the resurrection. This was an *euangelion*, or acceptable message brought from heaven by him who had the SPIRIT WITHOUT MEASURE. (John, iii. 34.) *Except your righteousness exceed the righteousness of the Scribes and Pharisees, ye shall in* NO CASE *enter into the kingdom of heaven.* Matth. v. 20. But the righteousness (or morality) of the heathens was that of the Scribes and Pharisees. It was the righteousness of the law, not of the gospel.

† Proverbs, xxiii. 26.

SECTION XLVII.

On the superior Morality of the Christian Philosophy.

THE operation of divine grace being no other than the melioration of our hearts, the purifying of the very fountain of our actions, it must of necessity lead to the practice of virtue, or, in the language of scripture, to GOOD WORKS. It is a gross calumny to say that the true doctrine of grace is unfavourable to morality. It inevitably produces every thing that is lovely and useful in social intercourse. The Holy Spirit's residence in the heart is inconsistent with vice and malevolence. It requires, indispensably, both personal purity and social love: and they who endeavour to obtain it, must begin and persevere in the practice of every moral virtue.

The love of God and mankind are the two main springs which actuate every Christian, who is regenerated by grace.

The love of God was not enforced by heathen philosophy. The love of man was indeed frequently, though feebly, recommended; but at the same time, many dispositions of mind were held honourable, and worthy of cultivation, which are often inconsistent with the love of man. Such are valour in offensive war, revenge, love of glory, and of conquest.

The love of God must have the most favourable influence on moral conduct; for no obedience is so perfect as that which arises from affection. It is the alert, cordial, sincere obedience of a dutiful child to a tender parent. It anticipates his will, and is desirous, in its honest zeal to please, of going even beyond the line prescribed by parental authority.

And what is the love of God, but the love of goodness, purity, rectitude? Love not only admires, but endeavours to imitate, the object of its affection. The love of God, therefore, produces a conduct as godlike as the condition of infirm humanity can admit. Hence St. John says, very strongly and truly, "This is the "LOVE of GOD, that we keep his commandments*." It is a natural and unavoidable consequence of loving the supreme perfection, that we imitate the qualities in which it consists—purity, justice, mercy, every thing that we can conceive of permanent goodness and beauty. Such is the first hinge of Christian morality.

And the second resembles it, in its benign effects on human nature, and the state of society.

It is the love of our fellow-creature; not merely FRIENDSHIP, which is often founded only on petty interest and mutual amusement; but universal philanthropy, extending even to enemies. Every man under the operation of this liberal affection, is considered and cherished as a FRIEND and neighbour. We are taught to love them as ourselves, and to do to them as we wish they should do to us.

This extensive law of love is peculiar to our lawgiver, the blessed Jesus. He calls it a *new commandment*. He makes it the distinguishing characteristic of the gospel. He proposes his own example, to enforce obedience to it. "This is my commandment," says he, "that ye love one another as I have loved you†."

But neither the love of God nor the love of man will exist in our hearts, in a due degree of ardour or sincerity, without the divine influence. The *natural* man loves the world and himself too well, to admit, whatever he may pretend or profess, affections so liberal, sublime, and disinterested. He loves MAMMON more

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[*] 1 John, v. 3.

[†] John xv. 12.

than God; and as for the love of his fellow-creatures, he wears a false appearance of it, a studied politeness, courteousness, and affability, for the sake of availing himself of their assistance in gratifying avarice, ambition, and the love of pleasure; but he hates, envies, or utterly neglects, all who contribute neither to his sordid gain, nor to his personal gratification. Grace alone can soften and liberalize his contracted bosom. Grace alone can render him sincerely, secretly, and impartially virtuous; and the best Christian is the best member of civil society.

Let him who doubts the excellence of Christian morality, read our Saviour's sermon on the mount, with the discourses formed upon it by Blair*, Blackall, and other great divines of the English church. He will be struck with its pre-eminent beauty and utility. Indeed the whole body of English sermons founded on the gospel, exhibits a system of morality which the world never saw before, and which would never have existed without the evangelical code. I earnestly recommend to general perusal Bishop Gastrell's little book, intitled, *Christian Institutes.*

SECTION XLVIII.

The true Genius and Spirit of Christianity productive of a certain Tenderness of Conscience, *or feeling of Rectitude, more favourable to right Conduct, than any Deductions of unassisted Reason, or heathen Morality.*

A MAN, rightly disposed by the influence of genuine Christianity, becomes a law unto himself, in all circumstances and situations. A DIVINE TEMPER, superinduced by divine energy on the heart, produces right conduct, just as a tree grafted with a kindly scion, brings forth fruit both delicious and salutary, under the natural operation of showers and sunshine.

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* James Blair, M.A. President of William and Mary College in America.

A true Christian has constantly impressed upon his mind a sense of God's presence, and a conviction that he is responsible to his Father in heaven for all his conduct. This keeps him in awe, mixed with love. He fears to do wrong, not with a servile fear, but an affectionate reverence for his all-powerful friend, who has shewn him great favour, and at the same time required, in return for it, obedience to his injunctions, as a condition of his continuance. He loves God from his heart; an affection, which comprehends in it the love of every thing that is good in moral conduct, every thing pure and holy in his own person, every thing beneficent to society.

The residence of the Holy Ghost in the Christian's heart increases his moral sensibility. He sees with greater acuteness the good and beautiful* in behaviour; he feels with additional vivacity the emotions of benevolence. It gives him pain, it does violence to his very nature, thus sublimed, to act basely, unjustly, unkindly. He knows that the divine principle within him will not inhabit a polluted shrine; but will take offence† and depart, if the temple be profaned by immorality.

Casuistry, or long and abstruse reasonings on the moral fitness or unfitness of actions, are totally unnecessary to the man whom the heavenly teacher has instructed. His determinations admit not such cold delay or doubtful hesitation. His heart turns, like the needle to the pole, with tremulous, yet certain propensity, to the point of rectitude. From the infirmity of human nature, and the violence of temptation, he may decline a little to the right or to the left; but the attraction to Heaven and virtue still acts upon and prevents his total aberration. Touched by heaven, he acquires a kind of polarity, which causes him to point thither without any inclination to deviate.

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* Καλοκαγαθια.

† *Res delicata est Dei Spiritus.* TERTULL.

Hence he is above the schools of the heathen moralists. He displays that superiority which Jesus Christ most justly claims over Socrates. Yet he may enjoy the beautiful compositions of the antients, if his education has enabled him to understand them. He may be pleased and instructed with their fine observations on life and manners, and the great advances they made in ethics, by the light of nature. But though he may derive great benefit from them, though he may be both informed and advised by them, yet he sees them defective, and finds that they are not absolutely necessary to accomplish the Christian, who, by the written word of scripture, accompanied by the Spirit's ministration, becomes sufficiently enlightened for the practice of the purest morality, and wise unto salvation. By Christian philosophy, he experiences not only illumination, but assistance: he is taught the way that he should go, and led by the hand in his journey.

I conclude, then, from this tender sensibility to right and wrong, and this propensity to kindness, which the supernatural agency of the Spirit causes in the heart, that true Christianity, such as is founded on the vital influence of the Spirit, makes the best moralists, the most useful and worthiest members of society. And as Christian philosophy is attainable by ALL, and not confined to the rich or the learned, it appears to me, that even politicians, who consider only the prosperity and peace of nations, would evince the highest wisdom, in first cultivating it themselves, and then encouraging it, by all prudent modes, among the people.

When a whole community shall become, by the preaching of *evangelical* doctrines, and the *example of the great*, subject to the power of conscience, warmed with the love of God, and all mankind, " just and good, " true and sincere, meek, humble, tender-hearted, and " compassionate, content, temperate, pure, and heavenly-minded, then will men become each a law to " himself," and all civil government will be greatly facilitated, while the general happiness is secured without wars and fightings, without tumult and discord, without capital punishments, without any of that severe coercion, which creates partial evil for the sake of the general security.

Such a state, it will be said, is chimerical and Utopian. I fear, in the present corruptions of Christianity, it may be visionary. But every approach to it is desirable, as it is an approach to the happiness and perfection to which man is formed to aspire; and therefore, it will behove all those who possess power, not for sordid purposes, but the general good, to hasten and extend the reign of grace. They should say with heart as well as voice, THY KINGDOM COME.

SECTION XLIX.

The great advantage of Christian Philosophy being taught by a commanding Authority.

WHEN mere men teach, they submit their lessons to the judgment of their hearers, who usually assume the office of critics, while they appear in the character of disciples. They will learn only what pleases their taste, or is approved by their judgment. But Jesus Christ being filled with the Spirit of God, taught with commanding authority. "I and the Father are one" (says he). "I speak not of myself, but of him that "sent me. WHOSO KEEPETH MY SAYINGS, SHALL NOT "TASTE OF DEATH."

What heathen philosopher ever dared to come forward, as a teacher of mankind, with such weighty words as these? But it will be found, that however a few among mankind may be disposed to listen to calm reasonings, the great mass is most effectually taught what is fair and what is base, what is useful and what destructive*, by the voice of well-founded authority.

The scriptures, especially those of the New Testament, have long obtained this authority. We read them, not as we read any other book of the wisest of mortals; not as judges, empowered to condemn or approve; but as pupils or dependents listen to the commands of an acknowledged master, whom they, at the same time, love and fear: and whose commands, they are sensible, are for their good, however disagreeable the duty which they prescribe. We consult them as an oracle. But we do not so consult the dialogues of Plato, or the Manual of Epictetus.

"There are," (says the author of the Light of Nature pursued,) "many excellent sentiments of God and mo-"rality interspersed in the writings of the antients: but "those writings are studied by few, and read chiefly "for curiosity and amusement, regarded as ingenious "compositions, shewing a sagacity and justness of "thought in the authors. They may make some im-"pression in the reading, which quickly dies away "again, upon laying the book aside; as Tully tells us was "his case, with respect to Plato upon the immortality "of the soul. Whereas the Testament is the first book

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* ——"*Quid sit pulchrum, quid turpe, quid utile, quid non.*"
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"we are taught to read, to receive as the oracle of God, "containing the way to salvation, which, at our almost "PERIL, we must not disregard, and the truth whereof "it is a sin to doubt: therefore, whatever is drawn "thence, comes accompanied with a reverence, and "idea of high importance, which give a force to the "impression. Let a man take for his thesis the stoical "maxim, *Things out of our power are nothing to us*, and "descant upon the imprudence of solicitude and anxiety "for future events, which we can no ways prevent or "provide against, it will not work the effects which the "very same discourse might do, pronounced from the "PULPIT, upon the text, "*Sufficient unto the day is the* "*evil thereof*."

Where is the uninspired philosopher, who can address mankind with the authority of St. Paul? "My speech "and my preaching" (says he to the Corinthians), "is "not with enticing words of man's wisdom, but with "demonstration of the SPIRIT AND POWER, that your "faith might not be in the WISDOM OF MEN, but in the "*power of God* (accompanying and enforcing my words.) "We speak the wisdom of God in a mystery, even "the *hidden wisdom*, which none of the princes of this "world knew, but which God hath revealed unto us by "his Spirit, the τα Βαθη του Θεου, the depths of God. "We have received, *not the spirit of the world*, but the "Spirit which is of God; that we might KNOW the things "that are freely given to us of God; which things also "we speak, not in the words which man's wisdom "teacheth, but which the Holy Spirit teacheth, explaining the * things of the Spirit, (the *instructions* of the "Spirit,) in the language of the Spirit†." Again, to the Ephesians he says, "The mystery of Christ, which in

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* See Wolf. Cur. Critic. in Loc. and Chapman's Eusebius.

† 1 Cor. ii. 4, 5. 7, 8. 10. 12, 13.

"other ages was not made known to the sons of men, "is now revealed unto his holy apostles and prophets, "by the Spirit*." "For this cause" (he adds in another place) "thank we God without ceasing, because, when "ye received the WORD OF GOD, which ye heard of us, "ye received it not as the *word of men*, but, *as it is in "truth*, the WORD OF GOD†." He gives also a menacing admonition to those who should despise his directions, as despising not man, but God. "HE THAT "DESPISETH, DESPISETH NOT MAN, BUT GOD, WHO "HATH GIVEN UNTO US HIS HOLY SPIRIT‡."

Such is the commanding authority with which Christianity addresses itself to men, including, in its peculiar doctrines and sublime mysteries, the finest ETHICS, though not systematically delivered, which the world ever saw. Let it be considered what an advantage it is to have even the best heathen morality inculcated with the sanction of COMMANDMENTS from the all-wise and all-powerful Creator. Such is now the case where Christianity prevails. And would it be wise, even in a political sense, though policy is a very inferior consideration, to suffer a mode of teaching men to be just and good, thus efficacious, thus firmly and extensively established, to fall into neglect? When will the politicians of the world again obtain so powerful an engine? What have they to substitute, if they break or take away the main spring of this most efficacious, long-tried *machine?* I beg leave to apologize for using so degrading a term. I am speaking, in their own language, to the worldly-wise, who despise the gospel.

Some universal, *authoritative* code of *moral* law is wanted to instruct the MILLION, high and low, rich and poor, with great and certain effect. What teacher, from the schools of philosophy, antient or modern, if he deprive us of Christianity, can supply the defect? Will he not strive to supply it, but suffer mankind to lapse into ignorance, barbarism, and brutality? He may give us a laboured system. But nothing which the most ingenious and learned can invent, however excellent its rules and precepts, can gain the advantage which Christianity already possesses by its AUTHORITY alone. Time, and the concurrence of whole nations, have combined with its own excellence to render it impressive beyond any human system. It is adapted to the poor and unlearned*, of which the majority of mankind, in all ages and countries, consist. It speaks to them as a voice from Heaven, and it will be heard.

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* Ephes. iii. 5. † 1 Thess. ii. 13. ‡ 1 Thess. iv. 8.

But its AUTHORITY must be infinitely increased, when men shall be convinced that the written gospel is accompanied at the present hour, and will be to the end of time, with the MINISTRATION OF THE SPIRIT, the actual operation of the Holy Ghost, vivifying and illuminating the divine principle within us. Christian philosophy is a sun; while all other, to use the poet's language, is, comparatively, but "darkness visible."

Christ taught as one having AUTHORITY. *Christ spake as never MAN spake;* and they who hear him with faith, will, through the operation of the HOLY GHOST, possess a wisdom and a happiness MAN never knew how to bestow, and can never take away.

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* But under the management of some persons, as Erasmus observes, EST INGENIOSA RES ESSE CHRISTIANUM; *it requires a great deal of* INGENUITY *to be a Christian;* as the TREE OF KNOWLEDGE was once preferred to the TREE OF LIFE, so learning is preferred to piety; and as *Grotius* expresses it—*ex* RELIGIONE ARS FACTA EST.—RELIGION IS MADE AN ART by many, as it has by some, a trade.

SECTION L.

Morality, or Obedience to the Commandments of God in social Intercourse and Personal Conduct, remarkably insisted upon in the Gospel.

THAT most injurious calumny, which asserts that the doctrine of grace is unfavourable to the purest virtue* and the most beneficent behaviour in civil society, must be refuted in the mind of every reasonable and impartial man, who attends to the following passages of Scripture:

" He that hath my commandments, and keepeth " them, HE IT IS THAT LOVETH ME. If ye love me, " keep my commandments. If a man love me, he will " keep my words. He that loveth me not, keepeth not " my sayings. Every branch in me that beareth not " fruit, he taketh away; and every branch that beareth " fruit, he purgeth it. Ye are my friends, if ye do whatsoever I command you. If ye continue in my word, " then are ye my disciples indeed. Hereby do we know " that we know him, if we keep his commandments. " Whoso keepeth his word, in him verily is the love of

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* " They (the rationalists and *moral* philosophers) charge their " opposers for not pressing moral duties: if they mean thereby " *practical* Christianity, there are none in the world press it more. " *But we are not for a Pagan, but a Christian morality:* and think " it not adviseable to press external acts alone, without minding " the principle and root from whence all that is truly Christian " must spring. We count it absurd and preposterous to look for " fruits where there is no root: *for gracious acts where grace is not* " *planted in the heart.* They may deck a *may-pole* with as many " garlands as they please, and set off a *mast* with flags and streamers; but they will never thereby make them FRUIT TREES."

CLARKSON on *Saving Grace.*

" God perfected: hereby know we that we are in him. " Every man that has his hope in him, purifieth him- " self. Little children, let no man deceive you: he that " doeth righteousness is righteous; he that committeth " sin is of the devil. Whosoever is born of God, sin- " neth not; whosoever doth not righteousness, is not of " God. Pure religion and undefiled before God and " the Father, is this—to visit the fatherless and widows " in their affliction, and to keep himself unspotted from " the world. Be not deceived; neither fornicators, nor " idolaters, nor thieves, nor covetous, nor drunkards, nor " revilers, nor extortioners, shall inherit the kingdom of " God*."

It were easy to cite a great many more passages of the same moral importance; but the written Gospel is in the hands of all, and there no one can search, with a fair and candid mind, without finding the purest virtue enforced on the strongest motives that can possibly actuate a human creature.

The truth is, that the very same care and caution, the same virtuous exertions, are necessary to Christians, as if there were no supernatural and auxiliary interposition. Our endeavours must not be relaxed in the smallest degree. The difference and advantage lies in the *result* and *effect* of our endeavours. Under the divine influence, they will certainly be attended with *success*. They will promote our happiness *infallibly*. The CHOICE of our conduct must be voluntary, and the perseverance and labour must be directed by the purest motives, and the most steady, regular, and careful diligence, just as if we depended upon ourselves; while, at the same time, they are animated and supported by humble confidence in heavenly favour. No *remissness* is allowed on our part in consequence of God's *favour*. We are to *work* out our salvation with the utmost solicitude, knowing that he who gives us his grace, may, upon failure of our best endeavours, withdraw it, and leave us in a state of woeful desertion. Libertinism can avail itself of no such doctrines as these, which, in the very first instance, most emphatically recommend *purity of heart*, the fountain of all external action.

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* John, xiv. 15. 1 John, ii. 3. 5, &c. Jam. i. 27. 1 Cor. vi. 9, 10. Eph. v. 5, 6.

It is remarkable of the gospel, that it teaches obedience to human law, and every moral virtue, not only for wrath, but also for conscience sake.

SECTION LI.

Unbelievers not to be addressed merely with subtle *Reasoning, which they always oppose, in its own way, not to be ridiculed, not to be treated with severity, but to be tenderly and affectionately exhorted to prepare their Hearts for the reception of the* INWARD WITNESS, *and to relume the* LIGHT OF LIFE, *which they have extinguished, or rendered faint, through Pride, Vice, or total Neglect.*

FACTS have evinced, that mere human disputation has little effect in converting the infidel. The infidel has often been remarkable for sagacity, and richly furnished with all human learning, though little acquainted with divine knowledge. I never knew any of them retract their errors, after the publication of the most ingenious and laborious books which claimed the honour of completely refuting them. It is time to try another method, since none can be more unsuccessful than that which has hitherto been used. It is time to trust less in human means, and rely on the *power of*

God, which will manifest itself in the hearts of all men who persevere with earnestness in seeking *divine illumination.*

I deem it extremely imprudent and indecent to ridicule the unbeliever. It is setting him an example, which he may follow to the great injury of all that is serious and truly valuable both in morals and religion. It argues a levity and disregard for his happiness, very unbecoming any man who knows the value of a human soul, or who professes a solicitude to *save it alive.* Tho' it cause no conversion, it will produce retaliation.

Still more unchristian is it to treat him with severity. I have read books professing to recommend the benign religion of Christ, and to refute all objections to it, yet written in the very GALL OF BITTERNESS, displaying a pride and malignity of heart which may justly prompt the unbeliever to say, " If your religion, of which you " profess to be a believer, and which you describe as " teaching charity or benevolence in its fullest extent, " can produce no better a specimen than your own temper and disposition, let me preserve my GOOD-NATURE, " and you may keep your Christianity, with all the advantages you boast that it contains, in your own exclusive possession.

The late Bishop Warburton treated infidels with a haughty asperity scarcely proper to be shewn to thieves and murderers, or any, the most abandoned, members of society. Many have doubted, from the tenour of his writings, whether he was a believer; or whether he only thought it sufficient, for the sake of rising in the church, to support religion by argument as a state engine. Certain it is, that the spirit which he shews towards his opponents* is not the Spirit of Grace; that Spirit which is loving, gentle, and easy to be entreated. His spirit is singularly proud and acrimonious; and so has been the spirit of many of his predecessors and successors.

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* The following is a specimen of the TEMPER with which Bishop Warburton wrote his book on the *doctrine of Grace.* In

How amiable and gentle, on *comparison*, the language and sentiments of Voltaire * and Rousseau! Compare them with the mean, narrow, selfish sentiments of a time-serving preferment hunter, or the political caution and hypocrisy of a sacerdotal COURTIER. Voltaire and Rousseau would have loved Christianity, and probably believed it, if it had not been distorted and disfigured by the malignant passions of angry, polemical defenders of it, who shewed their love of Christ, by *hating* their brother, and who appeared by their actions to mean little by their professions, besides the gratification of pride and avarice.

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the fifth chapter, where he is speaking of the office and operations of the Holy Spirit, he has the following note on Mr. WILLIAM LAW, who, if mistaken, is allowed to have been a sincere Christian, and a very good as well as ingenious man:

"This poor man," (says the great Prelate,) "whether misled by his fanaticism or his spleen, has here fallen into a trap which his folly laid for his MALICE."

There is then no malice in this observation, no pride, no revenge.

* "In the writings of Voltaire, who never fails to have a taunting hit at the clergy, the CURE' is generally an amiable personage, a charitable man, a friend to the poor and unfortunate, a peace-maker, and a man of piety and worth."

ROBISON'S *Proofs of Conspiracy*.

Voltaire saw in the CURE' (or *parish priest*) real Christianity—in the court-clergy of France, hypocrisy, villainy, pride, and CRUELTY.

Would not the true spirit of Christianity reprobate such men, hiding the foul fiend under the white robes of religion? I bear my testimony, in the strongest terms, against the general tendency of Rousseau's and Voltaire's writings; but think much of their evil is to be attributed to the COURT CLERGY of France.

Religion is beautiful. Full of grace are her lips. She shall speak for herself to the hearts of unbelievers, and the world:

"Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy "laden, and I will refresh you. I call you, not for the "sake of promoting any worldly interest, not for politi-"cal purposes, not for an ecclesiastical party, not to "maintain the riches or grandeur of any establishment; "but that I may make you happy; that I may dispel "the clouds of trouble and doubt which darken your "paths, and shew you the sunshine of Heaven. Mine "is a spirit of love. I am a lover of men. I seek to "do you good. I bring the glad tidings of the Gospel; "that is, I disclose to you that God Almighty, in pity "to suffering and erring mortals, sends a COMFORTER, "the Holy Ghost, descending like a dove, all peacea-"ble, gentle, lovely. I fill you with hope; and hope is "a cheerful passion. It will tranquillize your agitated "bosoms, and lead you rejoicing on your way to the "silent grave, whither you must go, whether you make "your journey to it gay and pleasant, as you may, under "my guidance, or dismally dark, as it will ever be "when I withdraw my lustre."

Would not such a mode of address be more likely to conciliate men who *oppose themselves* while they reject Christianity, than all the angry, taunting language which has been used, not only against professed infidels, but against *believers* who differed a little, in matters of indifference. South, Bentley, Warburton, and some able writers in recent times, have shewn, in their zealous defences, the pride of pedantry, the fierceness of barbarians, the subtlety of politicians, but quite forgot the gentleness which characterizes the WISDOM FROM HEAVEN, and which alone can win souls by the charms of soft persuasion, assisted by the holy spirit of love.

It is said of Dr. Johnson, that he used to declare, he loved a good HATER. Many polemical divines have shewn themselves capable of this passion of HATRED in its highest perfection. But hatred begets hatred; and Dr. Johnson's declaration is among those inconsistencies in his life, which prove a great man still but a man. I am sorry that this saying should be recorded of him; for Dr. Johnson professed himself a zealous Christian, and Christ taught us to *love* even an enemy. According to the Christian rule, an enemy, instead of being *hated*, is to be melted to love and kindness by good usage.

The *odium theologicum*, displayed in *controversy*, is, in my opinion, the greatest *opprobrium theologicum*. *Warburtonian* insolence and ill-nature have done more injury to the church, and to the cause of Christianity, than any of the writers whom they were intended to gall and mortify.

SECTION LII.

Of the inadequate *Idea entertained by many respectable Persons concerning Christianity; with a Suggestion on the Expediency of their considering the true Nature of Christian Philosophy.*

TO abstain from gross, enormous, open, and scandalous vices, to comply with the outward ceremonies of the Church, and to reciprocate the usual and formal civilities of life, constitutes, in the opinion of multitudes, not only a very respectable member of society, but a very good Christian. Concerning the DOCTRINES of Christianity, such persons give themselves little concern, but plume themselves on *decently* practising the DUTIES; by which they understand nothing more than a very imperfect kind of heathen morality, and the avoidance of such conduct as might expose them to the animadversion of law, or to the loss of reputation. The DUTIES of Christianity thus limited, they think easily discernible, without study or reading, by common observation and common sense. *Doing as others do*, as far as the decorum of established manners allows and prescribes, is the grand rule. Such persons pass through life with great credit, paying their way, and making themselves agreeable in company, and are seldom mentioned but with the praise of very good sort of people.

Exactly such sort of people they might have been if *Christianity* had never existed. They hold no opinion, they adopt no practice *peculiar* to Christianity. The Gospel, which they profess to embrace, is a leaden rule, an accommodating guide, an humble companion, that must obsequiously stand on one side, whenever it is in the way of a fashionable practice. Gaming, duelling, and many modes of gratification inconsistent both with the letter and spirit of the Gospel, seem to receive no check from this convenient species of Christianity.

Any thoughts which may occasionally intrude of a very *serious* kind, are laughed away by the surrounding circle, as vapours, fancies, the effects of morbid melancholy, or of nervous indisposition. Company, public places, public diversions, are immediately proposed as a sovereign remedy; and indeed they certainly are so far a remedy, that they banish *serious thoughts*, but they also banish that *happy disposition* (for happiness is serious) which might have caused the *visitation from on high*, and obtained, for the weary sick heart, the sweetly-refreshing cordial of divine grace.

Attendance at polite places of public worship seems to constitute the piety of such persons; and public subscription to fashionable or political contributions shews their charity. It seems fair to infer, that their piety and charity are thus circumscribed, because their actions, on other occasions and at other places, seem inconsistent with piety or charity. Sunday is often employed by them in a manner forbidden both by divine and human laws; and the poor at the next door to their mansions, in some retired village, are often unrelieved, while strangers at a watering place, (where the benefactors names are handed about,) and advertised objects, receive a very ample share of their public bounty.

All this while they consider themselves as good Christians. God only knows the heart; but if they are mistaken, as is probable, their mistake is a very unhappy one. They are depriving themselves of the benefit of Christianity.

But their mistake probably arises from ignorance. They are indeed very far from ignorant of many things. Their ignorance is chiefly religious ignorance; and it is caused by habitual inattention to the DOCTRINES of Christianity*. It is indeed rather difficult to avoid such ignorance, since their time is occupied in what religion calls vanity, and the few hours devoted to reading are chiefly employed in novels, where a truly Christian character would be deemed a perfect solecism.

I humbly hope that the contemplation of CHRISTIAN PHILOSOPHY, thus imperfectly represented in this little volume, may lead them to study it in the great authors whom I have cited; and I trust they will thence find a great increase in their comforts, and that their happiness will be less exposed to concussion, when founded on the solid basis of divine favour.

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* "And they said unto him, we have not so much as heard "whether there be any Holy Ghost; and he (St. Paul) said unto "them, unto what then were ye baptised?" *Acts*, xix. 2, 3.

SECTION LIII.

On indifference and Insensibility to Religion, arising from Hardness of Heart. No progress can be made in CHRISTIAN PHILOSOPHY *in such a State, as it is a State incompatible with the divine Influence.*

THE fine feelings with which nature formed the heart of man in his primeval state, and with which perhaps every infant is born, are too often rendered obtuse by indiscriminate commerce with the world; and the *heart of flesh*, once tremblingly alive to the softest touch of sympathy, is metamorphosed to a heart of stone. Deplorable change! for what is man when he ceases to feel? a reasoning vegetable, with this painful pre-eminence over the nettles and briars, that he has the power of being actively mischievous in the present state, and capable, when the sensibility shall be restored in another, of final and unsufferable woe. To lapse into this condition, to become past feeling, to have a seared conscience, is, without doubt, the heaviest calamity of which human nature is susceptible. Perhaps he who is reduced to it is not conscious of it at the time; a circumstance which, contrary to what might be expected, ultimately aggravates his misfortune. It is characteristic of this state, that while it is alive to the vanities and miseries of the world, it is dead to God and all the delicate sensations of unaffected virtue.

This condition of religious insensibility is not to be accounted for by causes merely physical or philosophical. The middle-aged fall into it as well as the old, the healthy as well as the diseased, men of the brightest talents no less than the dull and the stupid. But Christian Philosophy traces its origin, and pronounces it the consequence of an UNREGENERATE state, or the total defect of divine grace. He who lives in it has forsaken his God, the guide of his youth; and his God has forsaken him, and given him up to a reprobate mind, a heart of STONE, at once cold and impenetrable. WHOM HE WILL, HE HARDENETH*.

Happily he, who in his displeasure inflicted the misfortune, can remove it. "A new heart (says God) "will I give you, a new Spirit will I put into you; and "I will take away the STONY heart out of your flesh; and "I will give you a heart of flesh; and I will put my Spirit "within you, and cause you to walk in my statutes, and "ye shall keep my judgments and do them†."

From this declaration mankind may conclude, (as many ever have been and still are *experimentally* convinced,) that God influences the human bosom by his actual interposition, and the supernatural energy of his Holy Spirit. Christ himself says, "*Lo! I am with you,* "*even unto the end of the world.*" But how is he with us but by the Holy Ghost, whose ordinary operations are now as energetic as ever on the bosom of the true believer. Except a man be born again of this Spirit, we read in express language, "he cannot see the king- "dom of God." No words can be more explicit. They mean regeneration by Grace, or what else do they mean? They support, as on a rock, the doctrine of divine agency; and without this doctrine, all teaching and preaching is "as salt that has lost its savour." This doctrine forms the solid basis of CHRISTIAN PHILOSOPHY. All morality, every precept and principle which leads to happiness present or future, stand upon it immoveably. Other buildings are of hay and stubble; this is of gold and marble.

And with respect to the charge of blameable enthusiasm, which is constantly brought, and cannot be too frequently repelled, let us hear Bishop Lavington, so great an enemy to methodism, that he wrote the severest book which ever appeared in opposition to it. But thus he speaks to his clergy, on a solemn occasion, when he was instructing them how to execute their pastoral office:

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* Romans, ix. 18.

† Ezekiel, xxxvi. 26, 27.

" My brethren," says he, " I beg you will rise up " with me against MORAL PREACHING. We have long " been attempting the reformation of the nation by dis- " courses of this kind. With what success? NONE AT " ALL. On the contrary, we have dexterously preach- " ed the people into downright infidelity. We must " change our voice. We must preach Christ, and him " crucified. Nothing but the GOSPEL is, nothing will " be found to be, the *power of God unto salvation*, besides. " Let me therefore again and again *request*, may I not " add, let me CHARGE you, to preach JESUS, and sal- " vation through his name. Preach the Lord who " bought us; preach redemption through his blood; " preach the saying of the great High Priest; HE WHO " BELIEVETH SHALL BE SAVED; preach repentance to- " wards God, and faith in our Lord Jesus Christ."

Thus Bishop Lavington; a man who abhorred fanaticism. Who could ever suspect Archbishop Secker*, Bishop Hurd, Bishop Horne, Bishop Horsley, of irrational enthusiasm? Yet, in their discourses and charges, they all urge their Clergy, not to preach mere moral doctrines, the philosophy of the heathens, but the *Gospel;* that is, the great doctrines of redemption, atonement, satisfaction by Christ, and the necessity and importance of divine Grace. If, by the coming of Christ, God recommended only a MORAL SYSTEM, merely REPUBLISHED the religion of nature, this would in fact have been no *Revelation.* Indeed, a merely moral Christianity is Deism.

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* " The truth, I fear, is," says Archbishop Secker, " that " many, if not most of us, have DWELT TOO LITTLE ON " THESE DOCTRINES," the doctrines of Grace and other peculiar doctrines of Christianity, " in our SERMONS—by no means, in " general, from *disbelieving* or slighting them."

Again, says the same discerning Primate, " We have, in " fact, LOST MANY OF OUR PEOPLE TO SECTARIES, BY NOT " PREACHING IN A MANNER SUFFICIENTLY EVANGELICAL."

Secker's Charge.

There never was a more discreet, rational, or judicious Archbishop than Secker. He could not favour fanaticism.

When Christianity is the national religion, and great revenues are allotted to its professional teachers, many may chuse to join the crowd of Christians for the loaves and fishes; many may call themselves Christians who have nothing of Christianity but the name, and in their hearts despise even the name; but let all serious and sensible men remember, *that if the Gospel is hid, it is hid to them that are lost, whose eyes the god of this world hath blinded;* let them in time beware, lest that come upon them which is spoken by the prophet: "Behold, "ye despisers, and wonder and perish; for I work a "work in your days, a work which you will in no wise "understand, though a MAN declare it unto you*"

SECTION LIV.

A Self-Examination recommended respecting religious Insensibility.

LET every reader take a view of the present state of his heart. Let us all look inwardly, and consider our real state, without self-flattery and deceit, uninterrupted either by business or pleasure.

Does my heart require renovation? Is it piously inclined to God, and kindly to my fellow-creature? Am

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* Acts, xiii. 40, 41.

I convinced of my own ignorance, weakness, and unworthiness? Have I enquired into the health of my soul, the state of my temper and disposition, with half the solicitude with which I take care to feed, to cure, to adorn my body? If not, I may call myself a Christian, and join the congregation of Christians, but I am probably still a heathen, still unregenerate. I may be in the gall of bitterness, and the bond of iniquity. My heart may be hardened through the deceitfulness of sin, and as I value my happiness in this short state of existence, or my immortal soul, I must seek the divine Grace, to give me a feeling sense of my wants and wretchedness, and of God's power to illuminate and comfort me by his Holy Spirit.

But supposing that I am feelingly convinced of sin and misery, and sincerely wish to be delivered from it, do I seek deliverance by the Gospel means, that is, through Jesus Christ; or do I depend upon my own reason, a few moral acts and habits observed for the sake of decency, for my own health, wealth, and that reputation in the world which is necessary to the advancement of my interest? If so, my morality is worldly wisdom, and my religion has no claim to Christianity. I am unregenerate, unconverted, unrenewed, notwithstanding my baptism and my professions; and continuing as I do by choice a heathen, in the midst of the light of Christianity, which at the same time I solemnly profess, I must finally perish, after an unsatisfactory life.

Is my Christianity a cold, philosophical assent to a few propositions in the Gospel, evident before the Gospel was divulged, and such as I select from others of the same authority in the same book, which I do not so well approve? Then is my religion nominal only. I profess to believe, as others appear to do, what I never in my life fully considered. I am content to live *without God in the* WORLD, so long as my corn and my wine increase, and I can say to my soul, "Soul, thou "hast much goods laid up for many years, take thine "ease, eat, drink, and be merry*." For the sake of living at peace, and for the sake of credit, which is intimately connected with my interest, I conform to all outward ceremonies and all moral decencies; but my heart has not yet been truly turned to God. I know no other God than my own gain and pleasure; and as to heaven, this earth, so long as I secure to myself a large share of it and its good things, is my paradise. I say to myself, "It is good for me to be here; here will I "build my tabernacle; for it is a pleasant place, and I "have a delight therein. But what shall I say when "this world is receding from me, when my senses de-"cay, and death evidently approaches? Then shall I "have no comfort, unless God should soften my heart "by the effusion of his Spirit. But lest my obduracy "should grow impenetrable by time, I will *immediately* "implore the divine favour, in co-operation with my "own endeavours, to restore my religious sensibility. "I will henceforth cultivate the love of God."

But to love God only, is not enough. Do I love my FELLOW-CREATURE? or, as it is expressed in Scripture, "my neighbour?" The apostle says, "Beloved, let us "love one another, for love is of God, and every one "that loveth is born of God, and knoweth God; he "that loveth not, knoweth not God, and therefore can-"not be born of him, for God is love†." How, then, is my heart affected towards my fellow-creatures? Are my friendships merely combinations for the sake of interest and pleasure? Is there any human being in the world whom I wish to be miserable, and would render so if I had him in my power? Have I no sympathetic feelings for men as men? If I cannot recollect acts of disinterested benevolence, I may rest assured that it is the same hardness of heart which renders me insensible to God, that has also made me a stranger to the social affections. I have need, therefore, to pray that God would thaw my heart by the sunshine of his grace. He who can turn a heart of stone into a heart of flesh, will cause me to feel, by his Spirit's influence, for those who share with me the evils incident to humanity.

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* Luke xii. 20.

† 1 John, iv. 7, 8.

By such questions as the above, and many such every man may propose to himself, the state of the heart may be ascertained much better than by signing articles or repeating a symbol.

God certainly made the heart of man tender. Jesus himself wept, and thus forever hallowed the briny fountain. Tears are appropriated to man, as one of the most honourable distinctions which separate him from the brute creation. When man has dried up the sacred source by acquired insensibility, he has degraded his nature, and must have recourse to God to make him a new creature, to regenerate and render him alive to the sentiments of divine love, and the soft touches of humane sympathy. God's Spirit can break the rock of flint asunder, and cause the waters to gush from it in abundance.

And can I venture to hope that he will do so, that he will melt my obduracy? Yes, certainly; for Jesus Christ has PROMISED the influence of his Spirit to renew the heart, and accomplish the great work of regeneration. Without this I cannot be happy. I may be rich, great, learned, but I cannot be happy. I am lost and undone without it; in a state more degraded and wretched than that of the lowest and obscurest human being, whose piety and humility may have drawn down upon his heart the holy emanation of divine love.

SECTION LV.

The Sum and Substance of Christian Philosophy the Renewal of the Heart *by Divine Grace; or the softening it and rendering it susceptible of virtuous and benevolent impressions, by cultivating the two grand Principles—Piety to God, and Charity to Man.*

WHAT is Christian wisdom or philosophy? Let the apostle answer; it is to "put off the old man, "which is corrupt, and to put on the new man, which, "after God, is created in righteousness and true holi-"ness." We must be born again, or it had been better for us that we had not been born at all. The wisdom from above is the true Christian philosophy; that wisdom which, we are told*, "is first pure, then peaceable, "gentle, easy to be entreated, full of mercy and good "fruits, without partiality, and without hypocrisy."

Hardness of heart is incompatible with this wisdom which is full of mercy. The bosom must be softened by divine influence. Redeem the time, therefore, that ye have hitherto lost in a cold, lifeless, formal, *decorous* religion. Love God, love your neighbour, with the ardour of a sincere mind, and the amiable simplicity of infantine innocence. Seek Jesus Christ with the earnestness of one who is a Christian by choice, and not merely because he was born in a Christian country, or of Christian parents; not because the laws of the land have established that religion, and it is creditable to appear among its professors in places consecrated to public devotion. Be Christians on your pillows, in your daily employments, in the occupation of your merchandize or agriculture, as well as in your church, and on the day set apart for divine service. Let Christ, by the Holy Ghost, be formed in your hearts, restoring in you the image of God, in which you were created, but which was sadly sullied, or quite defaced, by the fall of the first Adam, and can be restored only by the mercy of the second.

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* James, iii. 17.

If there were but a probability that these comfortable doctrines are true, a wise man would cherish them; but as they are abundantly confirmed by the written word, by the church, by the learned, by the experience and testimony of millions of pious men; who would not resolve to believe, and if any doubts should at any time arise, to say, "Lord, help thou my unbelief!"

Religion has been, and is, the delight of a great part of our fellow-creatures throughout Christendom. It may be ours, if we will duly *apply our minds to it.* Consider with what ardour of attachment many seek pictures, books, the works of art, the objects of taste and fancy. They *learn to love them*, by *applying* their minds to them. Half the *application* bestowed on things, which, at best, are but toys, if bestowed on religion, would make it your chief delight, the guardian of your youth, and the comfort of your age and affliction. You would no longer consider its duties and employments as heavy and dull. You would feel, not only the offices of charity, but devotion, sweet to your soul. The gracious words of gospel truth, of prayer, and thanksgiving, would, "come o'er "thine ear," as the poet says,

> " ——— like the sweet south,
> " That breathes upon a bank of violets."

It is justly said, that in devotional offices, passion becomes reason, and transport, temper. Heaven must disdain the cold prayer, the lukewarm praise of insensibility and indifference. The incense must blaze on the altar, before the sweet odours can ascend to the skies. Cold devotion is indevout. Heartless thanksgiving is an insult. What! shall we be warm, and anxious, and sanguine, in worldly pursuits, in politics and party, and dull and languid as followers of Christ, in shewing our zeal in the cause of the great Captain of our salvation, which is the cause of all mankind, a cause in which Heaven and earth are interested?

Be it the great endeavour of all who would obtain wisdom from above, to conciliate, by *fervent* prayer, the grace of God, which will remove all hardness of heart, the cause of that coldness and insensibility, which is too often most unjustly honoured with the name of MODERATION*.

SECTION LVI.

On spiritual Slumber, as described in the Scriptures, and the necessity of being awakened.

THE religious world is divided into many sects; but perhaps the most numerous party consists of nominal Christians, who appear to adopt no religious opinions at all; who, indeed, neither deny the truth of any religion, nor controvert its doctrines; but who give themselves up to the pleasures and business of the world, or to mere thoughtlessness and inactivity, and leave religion to its professed ministers, to their neighbours, to the weak, the sick, and the superannuated. In the words of Isaiah, "They hear, but understand "not; and see, indeed, but perceive not; the heart of "this people is fat, their ears heavy, and their eyes "shut." With respect to their spiritual state, they may be said to have fallen into a deep sleep; and in the midst of their bodily activity, their souls are sunk in slumber. To these the animating words of the apostle are addressed; "Awake, thou that sleepest, and "arise from the dead, and Christ shall give thee light."

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* "*Because thou art* LUKE-WARM, I will vomit thee out of my "mouth"—*εμεσαι*—one of the strongest expressions of contempt and indignation in the holy scriptures. Rev. iii. 16.

Is it possible that men can sleep so soundly, in this uncertain state, while the house they inhabit may be said to be in flames, or while they lie on the very brink of a steep cliff, from which, if they fall, they fall to rise no more? Alas! it is not only possible, but common; though it is a sleep, in which, whosoever indulges, may possibly sleep on till he wake no more. It may be a fatal sleep; the sleep of death; the stupor of a lethargy; the numbness of a spiritual palsy; the insensibility of mortification.

They who fall into this deep sleep, like those who indulge the sleep of nature, commonly lie in DARKNESS; the darkness of voluntary *ignorance*. Indolence smooths their pillow, and silences their pavilion. Their eyes are closed by prejudice, and the curtains drawn around them by pride and presumption. The opiates of vanity, of worldly ease and pleasure, superinduce a kind of trance. Sealed are their eye-lids, but their sleep is not a quiet sleep; it is not sweet and refreshing, like the sleep of virtue, the balmy repose of health, wearied, at the close of day, with the exertions of beneficence.

It is a sleep interrupted by dreams. Shadowy, fantastic forms, of a thousand shapes and hues, flit before the fancy. *Ambition* has her dreams, *Avarice* her spectres, and *Pleasure* her visions of ideal bliss, painted with a glow of colouring, which the pencil cannot emulate.

Crowns and sceptres, purple robes, crimson banners, with titles of honour, and armorial bearings, pass, like a *pageant*, before the courtier, the statesman, the senator, the lawyer, the warrior. He fixes his eye upon them devoutly. He catches at them eagerly, as the glittering train moves on. They elude his grasp. He catches again. The air-drawn baubles vanish. Again he is disappointed. Still he perseveres; and with aching heart, and trembling knees, and palsied hand, he reaches, at last, with great difficulty, a coronet, a star, a ribband, and places it on his shaking head, or his throbbing bosom;—then, stumbling on the dark mountains, down he falls, stripped of all his blushing honours and his gorgeous robes. Clad in a shroud, and with a few vain words engraved on his coffin-plate, he is thrust, lest he should become noisome, into a mouldy vault, to rot and be forgotten HERE, where *alone* he sought distinction; and to appear all shivering and naked, before Christ, his judge; of whom he never once thought seriously, during the deep sleep and the long day-dreams of a vain, worldly, irreligious life.

Behold another dreamer, with a hoary head, lying down to rest, not on soft *pillows*, but on bags of gold. It is the miser; he dreams that the pale spectre of haggard poverty is pursuing hard after him; a cold sweat bedews his emaciated cheeks, and his teeth shake; but he is cheered again by dreaming of bargains, usurious contracts, of joining house to house, and laying field to field; of saving all he gains, of taking advantage of the wants of one, and the ignorance of another, to fill his *enormous chest*. And lo! it is now full. Is he happy? and does he use it? Does he enjoy it, for the purpose it was designed? Does he think of God the giver of all good things? Does he distribute it to the poor? No; his joy consists in telling it o'er and o'er, weighing it with shaking hands, and viewing it with a dim spectacled eye, which can scarcely distinguish a counterfeit from a true coin. At some future period, when he shall have completed a certain sum, he dreams that he shall build, plant, do good, and be whatever a man ought to be. But the sleep of death comes on before the dream of life is over, and he is gone. And lo! his heir thrusts him into the ground, with a face of affected grief, that can hardly hide his real joy. Down sinks the dreaming dotard, into the bosom of that earth to which his mind was prone; his very name rots with his emaciated body; and his spirit, all poor, naked, and beggarly, moans and bewails that he laid up no treasure in heaven; that, in his earthly visions, he never thought of his soul; never felt a desire for the riches of grace.

And now behold his heir. Possessed of wealth which he never knew the toil of earning, he becomes a *man of pleasure;* and he also *dreameth a dream.* The banquet is prepared. The wine giveth its colour in the cup. The gaming-table is before him. Noise and riot drive away thought and care. The singing men and the singing women enter. Money is lavished on horses, dogs, sharpers, buffoons; and no debts regarded but those of false honour. His heart dances to the melody of the harp and the viol; he pampers every bodily sense, till pleasure itself is converted into pain or insensibility. He dreams on, and soon sees phantoms of pleasure, the ghosts of departed joys, dancing, in mockery, before his eyes. His powers of perception decay, his youth and health are departed, and he droops like a hyacinth, broken down by a hasty shower, before it has expanded its beauty. Down he sinks to the earth, into an untimely grave, and mourns, as he retires from the shadowy scene, that a greediness of pleasure surfeited his senses, and robbed him, not only of longer life, but of real enjoyment during its continuance. What preparation did he make to relish the pleasures which flow at God's right hand; the pleasures of reason, the sweets of benevolence, all-pure, all-spiritual, as exquisite in the enjoyment, as exalted and durable in their nature? Alas! none. He had neither time nor inclination. His soul slept, while his body waked with a fever; the fine sensibilities of the spiritual nature were enveloped in slumber, while his bodily senses were unnaturally jaded, and prematurely worn out by constant vigilance and activity. He drank the cup of pleasure to the dregs, and the dregs were to his palate wormwood, and to his vitals poison.

Similar to such slumbers and such dreams are the slumbers and dreams of many whom we meet walking in their sleep, in the streets of the city; whom we behold all lively and active in the gaily-illuminated theatres of pleasure, in the crowded emporium of commerce, in the courts of princes, in the senate-house, in the forum, and at the tribunal. Deeply do they drink the draughts of worldly vanity, which, like doses of opium, lay them indeed asleep; but at the same time fill them with self-conceit and pride, and disturb them with dreams, wild as the scenes of fairy land. It is not a sweet sleep; it is the sleep of disease, and resembles what the physicians call the COMA VIGIL, a waking slumber, a dangerous symptom. Then, let no man indulge the first tendencies to the sleep of the soul; but rather shake off dull sloth, and hear the voice which calls him like the cheerful herald of the morning: "Awake, thou that sleepest, "and arise from the dead, and Christ shall give thee "light." Cheerful, pleasant, merciful warning! But many, it is feared, are too fast asleep to hear it. They are, in their torpid state, like the swallows, in the winter; but even the swallows when the spring calls them forth, rise from their temporary death in unknown regions, to soar with joy and triumph in the fields of æther. The primroses and violets sleep on their banks for many months; but when the bland voice of the zephyrs whispers "arise," you see them spring forth, lift up their heads, and drink the sun-beams, and the dew of heaven. And shall the cold ear of man be deaf to the still small voice of conscience; and shall his eyes be impenetrable to the beams of grace? Many seem to have little in their nature of a religious disposition; yet let us not conclude that any of the sons of Adam, any of the redeemed of Christ, are destitute of that LIVING PRINCIPLE, which is to be fostered and cherished even to immortal life. There is in every man a spark, perhaps a *latent* spark, which only requires to be gently blown by the aspiration of the Holy Ghost, to become a clear light, and afford a vital warmth, to guide to all evangelical truth, and to invigorate the mind with faith and hope. There is in every man a seed of virtue, goodness, and piety, which only requires the divine grace to shine upon it, in order to become a flourishing plant, exuberant in its fine foliage, beautiful in its blossom, abundant in its delicious fruit, striking root deeply in the heart, reaching the heavens with its branches, and vegetating in beautiful verdure to all eternity.

To excite this spark, to cherish this little tender seed of grace, this, O sons of men, is the work, this the labour. Arise, therefore, and be doing, and the Lord be with you.

Let us, then, take an impartial view of our own state, and examine whether many of us are not in the state of spiritual sleeping and dreaming already described. How passes our life? We eat, we drink, we sleep. To-morrow and to-morrow the same dull repetition: we eat, we drink, we sleep. So also do the poor animals around us, whom we look down upon as our inferiors. How are we employed in the intervals of this vegetative life? We buy, we sell, we dress, we trifle, we visit, we tell or hear the tale of the day, often a trifling, often a false, sometimes a malevolent one; but in all this, have little other design than to pass away the time without reflection; to forget ourselves; to hide the prospect before us—death, judgment, heaven, and hell!

How stands the real state of that religion which we profess? We learn our catechism in our infancy; we read the bible at school; we go to church like others; we hear and repeat our prayers; but have we, indeed, considered our religion as our principal concern? Christianity is either true or not true. If we believe it true, it must be our chief concern; if not true, then why mock we both God and man by our hypocrisy? But we profess to believe it. Have we any secret exercises of the soul in converse and communion with God? Do we spend any time with our own hearts? Have we no sweet intercourse with heaven in solitude? no fervour of piety, no inward religion, no spiritual sensibility, no pious ardour, no secret store of comfort unknown to the world, and which the world cannot reach, locked up as the precious jewel, in the casket of the heart? If we have not, we are assuredly in that state which requires us to listen to that animating call, "Awake, thou that sleepest, and arise from "the dead;" for dead we are to God; dead to every thing but that vanity which ever terminates in vexation; dead to all those remains of excellence, which have preserved, amidst the ruins of human nature, some faint vestige of its original grandeur and grace.

Take away the *spiritual life*, and you level man with the brutes. He becomes immediately what the philosophers of old called him, an animal with two legs, and without feathers. How are the mighty fallen! The wings of the eagle are clipped. He no longer eyes the golden sun, but grovels, like a reptile, on the earth. You not only level him with the brutes, you make him more miserable than they: for he is sorely sensible of his evils, which they are not; he is sensible of his forlorn condition, sensible of the shortness and possible evils of life, suffers imaginary as well as real woe, and sees the *gloomy* prospect before him—the *grave* opening to swallow him up, and the possibility of something terrible beyond it. If we are but animals, then are we of all animals most miserable!

Since a religious LETHARGY is thus degrading to our nature, thus productive of misery, let us rescue ourselves from it to-day, while it is called to-day; and let no man say with the sluggard, "a little more sleep, and "a little more slumber, a little more folding of the "hands to sleep." Life ebbs apace. The day is far spent to many of us. The night is at hand, when the sad licence may be allowed to us in that severe permission, "Sleep on, now, and take your rest." Your sun is set, to rise no more. Death's scythed, triumphal car, drives on rapidly, and mows down all that stand in the way. It is computed, by the ingenious in calculation, that, on the surface of the globe, more than *fifty thousand* mortals, men, women, and children, die every *night*. How soon may any one of us make an unit in the thousands that every hour go down into the pit and are no more seen!

One of the best means of exciting ourselves, is a *due preparation* for the sacrament of the *Lord's Supper*. Let us never fail to receive it at Christmas, Whitsuntide, and EASTER. We shall thus experience a *resurrection* from the sleep and death of indifference, to life and hope in Christ our Redeemer.

It is, indeed, an alarming symptom of the spiritual slumber, that many of us go on from month to month, and from year to year, without receiving the sacrament; without seeking that mysterious communion between God and our souls; without feeling any need of it; without desiring it; without any hunger or thirst after it. If we were not wrapt in a deep sleep, or state of stupidity, we should long for it; feel an appetite for the heavenly manna; and come to the Lord's table, as to our daily meals, with eagerness and alacrity.

What shall we think of those numerous persons who, from year to year, hear notice given of the sacrament to be administered, and pay it not the least attention? who think it a matter which may concern any body but themselves? How many among the poorest of the poor never approach the altar; live and die, without having once received the sacrament, or sought any other means of grace? Do they think the rich only are capable of grace; that the rich only have souls to save; that our Lord, like the world, invites the rich only to his table? Think, did I say? Alas! they think little on the subject. They are in a deep sleep; lost in the night of ignorance. And it unfortunately happens, that if they are awakened at all, it is usually by the call of some *enthusiast improperly* called a *methodist**, who leads them from the chilness of indifference, to the burning fever of fanatical devotion. Let them rather hear the EVANGELICAL call, and apply it to themselves without delay; "Awake, "thou that sleepest:" and let them obey the friendly voice of him who came expressly to preach the gospel to the poor. Let them prepare themselves immediately to use the means of grace afforded them by the sacrament of the Lord's supper, and be thankful that at that table there are no invidious distinctions; that the rich and poor meet together, prostrate on their knees, before their Maker, partaking his bounty without partiality, and supplicating his mercy; all equally poor and helpless, without his GRACE.

There are, it seems probable, many others among us, who think *themselves* too *young* to be at all concerned with things so *serious* as the sacrament. They go, indeed, to church, but never think of the holy communion, because they are too *young* to be *serious*. Permit me to ask, what is the precise age at which the care of the soul is to commence? When does the minority of the soul terminate? If all are exempt who are young, and who *think* themselves young, how great will be the number! Is not going to church, a *serious* thing? They do not think themselves too young to go to church. May it not then be suspected, that as they think themselves unconcerned with the sacrament, they may also think themselves unconcerned with the prayers and the discourses of the church; and so may frequent the church, merely to display their external garb, to gaze and to be gazed at, to pass away an idle hour, and to comply with an established custom. But if their be truth in Christianity, theyare trifling with the most important matters, in a most dangerous manner. They are *acquiring a HABIT of considering the most sacred things with INDIFFERENCE.* If they are too young to think of *serious* things, they certainly are not too young to die. Let them take a walk in the church-yard, and read the inscriptions on the tomb-stones. They will find perhaps, as many *young* as old, among the victims of death; and they must allow that youth is a more *dangerous* season, with respect to *temptations*, than any other; and consequently, that it more particularly requires the succours of divine grace, to keep it from falling into sin and misery. And what so powerful a means of grace as the sacrament, after a due preparation?

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* Methodism is described as "GODLINESS without ORDER."

No; you are not too young to receive the divine blessing of grace. Only be sensible how much you want it; how wretched and how profligate you may become; into what shameful and dreadful conduct you may fall, without it. Awake, therefore, from a sleep which you cannot indulge without losing the *morning of life;* the best season for every kind of work, spiritual as well as worldly. Begin well, in order to end well. Remember your Creator in the days of your youth, and he will not forget you in the days of your old age. Trust not in beauty. Trust not in strength. Beauty alone has no charms in the eye of Heaven. Strength of body cannot avail against the arm of offended Omnipotence. But beauty and strength, combined with virtue and piety—how lovely in the sight of men! how pleasing to Heaven—peculiarly pleasing, because, with every temptation to deviate, they voluntarily walk in the path of duty.

There is another class yet, with whom I shall expostulate on the propriety of receiving the sacrament, which they are but too apt to neglect, apparently from an idea that they have no concern in it. They claim to be lookers-on, like spectators at a contest for life and death, without any interest in the event. I mean the numerous persons who fill the very useful and creditable station of servants and dependants, apprentices, and labourers for hire. These are apt to consider *Sunday* merely as a *holiday*, or rather vacation from labour; a day in which they are to adorn themselves above their rank and station, and to sacrifice to the idols of false pleasure and expensive vanity. To think of the sacrament or any other serious, affecting duty, on a day devoted to feasting, to jollity, and to wandering from house to house, would throw a gloom upon it, inconsistent with their schemes of enjoyment. Thoughtlessness and folly mark their conduct on that day, more than on any other day in the week; a day intended for their improvement in all virtue, honesty, and true wisdom. What! have they not souls, as well as their superiors in rank? Is not our God their God? Did not Christ die for them, as well as for their masters or employers? Think of these things, and let not the sabbath-day, intended to promote your salvation, contribute, more than any other day, to your destruction. Would you have it a day of pleasure? In order to be such, let it be a day of innocence, a day of devotion, a day of rational, sober, discreet recreation.

Think not that religion will destroy your cheerfulness. No; it will promote it. Nothing gives so fine spirits as a clear conscience; a bosom that feels the satisfaction of having discharged its duties to God and man. Then recreation and harmless pleasure are truly delightful. The sweet, in such circumstances, is without bitter; the rose without a thorn; the honey without a sting. I have ever recommended a *cheerful religion*; because all religion was certainly intended to make men happy; and because gloominess, moroseness, and severity, which some persons require in religious duties, originate in weakness and error, and lead to folly, misery and madness; to all that is despicable or deplorable. As religion is the comfort, superstition and fanaticism are the bane and curse of human nature. Let us ever beware of excess, even in good and laudable pursuits; for wisdom, and virtue, and happiness, all dwell with the golden mediocrity. Our exhortations to religion must indeed be warm and animated; because the greater part of men err, rather in not reaching the desirable point, than by going beyond it. Yet cautions are also necessary, lest the willing, the zealous, the tender-hearted, should be urged, by their own ardour and by persuasion, to dangerous and unhappy extremes.

We have, I think, seen that the lively, animating summons contained in the words, "Awake, thou that "sleepest," is necessary to a great part of mankind, whose feelings are become callous; and who (to repeat the emphatic words of scripture) have a heart of stone, instead of a heart of flesh; necessary to many, who are, upon the whole, commendable for the general decency and propriety of their conduct in the world, as the world is now circumstanced. Even good kind of people, as they are called, and appear to men, are not sufficiently awakened to the calls of religious duty. They acquiesce in decencies, decorums, plausibilities, and the cold formal morality which may be practised on the most selfish motives, for worldly interest, for health and for pleasure. They are not sufficiently sensible of the *gospel* truths, its great promises, and its dreadful denunciations of vengeance. They are virtuous heathens; followers of the religion of nature, not that of Christ. The world approves them, and therefore they approve themselves; but can the world save them? Can they save themselves? No; assuredly, if Christianity be not a fable, they must come to Christ for salvation.

Persons who live in pleasure, that is, who make vain and sensual pleasure the SOLE business of their lives, are expressly said, in scripture, to be DEAD while they live. They appear with smiles of *perpetual* gaiety; are often furnished with riches and honours; but yet, in the scripture sense, they are dead, if they are not alive to Christ. What avail their worldly ornaments? The SOUL takes no real delight in them, because it naturally aspires to higher things. So have I seen a nosegay of tulips, and pinks, and roses, put into the cold hand of a dead corpse, in a coffin, while the poor image of what once was man, could neither see the gaudy tints, nor smell the fragrance.

Shall we then not cry aloud, as we are commanded, in the hope of *awakening* such unthinking persons to a sense of their own miserable condition, and the hopes afforded by the gospel? Happy for ourselves and our fellow-creatures, if we could address a slumbering world with the trump of an archangel, uttering these enlivening words, "Awake, thou that sleepest, and arise from "the dead; and Christ shall give thee light."

All persons whatever, however decent and moral, that are in an *unregenerated* state, are represented, in the strong metaphorical language of scripture, as DEAD; but happily it is a death from which we may raise ourselves by PRAYER; and returning life will be cherished by heavenly influence.

For what says the friendly call? "Christ shall give "thee light." The sun of righteousness shall shine into the dark chambers of thy bosom, dispel the shades of ignorance, and disperse the phantoms of folly and vanity that sported in the sunless region. Think, poor darkling mortal, what is promised thee! "Christ shall "give thee light." As the sun in the morning breaks into thy chamber windows, and thou arisest from thy bed to feel his genial beams, and see all nature reassuming her beautiful colours; so the light of Christ, the light of grace, shall beam upon the soul, by the operation of the *Holy Ghost*, and thou shalt arise, and see the truth as it is in Jesus—see the beauty of holiness—the day-spring from on high—feel new vital warmth glowing in thy bosom; and "*though you have* "*lien among the pots**," (in the mire and rubbish of worldly vanity,) "yet shall you be as a dove, which hath "silver wings, and her feathers like gold."

After living the few days of our pilgrimage thus *awake* to God, *awake* to Christ, *awake* to the blessed influences of the Holy Ghost, your body, indeed, shall lie down, and pay that debt to nature, which we must all pay: yet your sould shall separate from it, (though not without a pang, yet) FULL OF HOPE. Old age, or disease, or accidents, will indeed bring your poor, frail, perishing flesh (for such is that of the strongest, the youngest, the most beautiful of us all) to the grave; your bones must lie down in the dust, from which they were taken, and the mourners shall go about the streets; but let them not mour *without hope*. Thy flesh shall rest in hope; peaceful shalt thou sleep till the morning of the resurrection; when the trumpet shall sound, and a voice shall be heard sweeter than the sweetest music to the reviving ear: "Awake! awake! thou that sleepest, and arise from the "dead, and I will *give thee light*, *life*, *glory*, *and immortality*. Sleep no more!—Arise, put on thy beautiful "garments!—My glory is rising upon thee. Go—"blessed Spirit,—and, in the vesture of a new and glorified body, shine among the spirits of just men made "perfect—thyself a Spirit, an immortal Spirit. Sleep "no more in the arms of death; for death is subdued; "and, as, like a faithful soldier, you watched with me "in the militant state, you shall now join me in the triumphal. Sleep no more the sleep of death; but rise, "and exult in light ineffable!"

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* Psalm lxviii. 13

SECTION LVII.

On the P*EACE OF* G*OD*, *that calm and composed State, which is produced by the* C*HRISTIAN* P*HILOSOPHY*, *and is unknown to the Epicurean*, *Stoic*, *and all other Philosophy*, *antient and modern*.

A GENERAL prospect of human life presents a scene of turbulence, of which the troubled ocean is an emblem. But there is a sweet, a peaceable, a tranquil state of self-possession, whether external circumstances are prosperous or adverse, which constitutes the most solid happiness of which human nature is capable. This enjoyment, arising from moderate desires, a regulated imagination, lively hopes, and full confidence in the Deity, is that *chief good*, which philosophers have vainly sought in the schools, by the strongest efforts of unassisted reason. What then can point it out, if *reason*, improved by science to the highest degree, has not been able to find it? The answer is obvious. The religion of Jesus Christ offers to its sincere votaries the PEACE OF GOD *which passeth all understanding;* a kind and degree of happiness, which no language can clearly express; which the understanding cannot adequately conceive, though the heart can *feel* it, with the most delightful experience.

"The peace of God," (says the world,) "what is it?" They know it not. Many have no conception of happiness, independent of external circumstances; the toys of childhood, protracted to age. They do not search for it *in themselves*, but in the eyes of the world. All their enjoyments must be violent, sensual, or, at least, OSTENTATIOUS. Admire them, talk of them, flatter them; let the diurnal papers exhibit their names in capitals, and fashion crowd to their door; let their equipages be splendid, and their mansions magnificent, their egress and regress recorded in the daily histories, or they sicken in the midst of health; they pine in the midst of abundance; the rose on their bosom loses its fragrance; the honey on their palates, its flavour. To be *celebrated*, even for folly, even for vice, is to them an enviable NOTORIETY; to be unnoticed in public circles, in the midst of every real blessing and solid comfort at home, infuses a bitter into all those sweets, which God in his bounty has lavished.

But the felicity arising from the PEACE OF GOD is neither the tumultuous extasy of the fanatic, nor the noisy merriment of the prodigal. It seeks no plaudits; it makes no parade. It blazes not out like the sudden eruptions of a volcano; but burns like the vestal fire, clear and constant, with a warmth that invigorates, without scorching; with a light that illuminates, without dazzling the visual faculty.

Thus desirable, how is the PEACE OF GOD to be obtained? it is an important question. Let us enter on the research. If we enter on it with dispositions truly humble and sincere, there is little doubt but we shall experience the truth of that comfortable declaration: "Ask, and it shall be given; seek, and ye shall find."

What said the wisdom of pagan antiquity, on the means of securing PEACE or tranquility? Much that was plausible; little to the purpose.

It was the advice of an antient philosopher: "Sub- "ject yourself to reason, and you shall be reduced "to no other subjection." Experience, however, has evinced, that human reason, under a variety of circumstances, is too weak and fallible to be depended upon, for the full security of human happiness. What he vainly attributed to reason, may with justice be ascribed to religion. Religion, duly understood, and duly attended to, is capable of giving much of that freedom from passion and perturbation, to which philosophy in vain pretended. Not that I mean to arrogate too much, or claim more than truth and experience will allow, even in favour of religion. While man preserves the nature which God gave him, he must continue subject to the transient impulse of those sensations from external objects which excite passion, and disturb repose.

All I contend for is, that religion, VITAL RELIGION, the religion of the HEART, is the most powerful auxiliary of reason, in waging war with the passions, and promoting that sweet composure which constitutes the peace of God. Reason may point out what is right, but she wants AUTHORITY in the minds of most men, to enforce obedience to her commands. Here religion steps in with majestic mien, and gives the sanction of a law to the dictates of discretion.

I recommend, therefore, to him who wishes to obtain the peace of God, a *diffidence* in human reason, however strong by nature, and however improved by study. A confidence in it leads to that pride which God resisteth. But I mean this *diffidence* to be chiefly confined to the operations of reason in *religious* disquisitions. Things *above* reason are not to be rejected as *contrary* to reason, but to be received with a reverential awe, and a devout submission of the understanding to the God who gave it.

He, then, who wishes to tranquillize his bosom, must have recourse to more powerful medicines than those of an empirical philosophy. Philosophy has been tried, from the earliest ages to the present hour, with little success. Philosophy is cold and inactive. She may influence and direct the understanding; but she cannot warm the affections with the love of God and virtue. SENTIMENT is necessary to *impel* the heart, to guide or regulate even the virtuous passions; and no sentiment is so efficacious for this purpose as the *devotional*. *The word of God*, as the strong language of scripture expresses it, *is quick and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit, and of the joints and marrow; and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart.*

From the shallow streams of philosophy, we must hasten to the living fountain of the Christian religion. It is the influence of God on the heart of man, the divine operation of the Holy Spirit on the spirit of human creatures, which alone can bestow a *permanent* tranquility; that peace of God, which passeth all understanding; that peace, which no human eloquence can clearly explain; which no human sagacity can, by its own unassisted efforts, procure; but which the devout heart of the believer feels with joy and gratitude.

This is the polar influence which can alone fix the tremulous needle, and point it directly to Heaven; streaming into the heart of man an emanation of divinity.

Let us then take a view of the fruits of the Spirit, as they are beautifully described by the Apostle. *The* *fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, long suffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance.*—These lovely virtues have a natural tendency to produce equanimity, self-possession, a serene, placid, delightful frame of mind, such as the sages of old conceived, indeed, but could not either procure or communicate. These make an earth a Heaven, and render it evident, beyond a doubt, that the true Christian, after all the boasts of the gay voluptuary, is the real MAN OF PLEASURE.

The *worldly* man of pleasure is indeed, for the most part, a man of pleasure only in name. His pains, upon the whole, greatly outweigh his pleasures; or his insensibility, contracted by excess, leaves him in the midst of all that luxury can spread before him, in a state very remote from the enjoyments of the temperate, humble, and sincere believer.

It would not be right to describe things in a declamatory and rhetorical manner, so as to violate the truth of representation, for the sake of maintaining even the cause of *religion*. But experience will justify me in asserting, that the numerous tribes in the gay and elevated circles, who pursue happiness in dissipation only, and never think of God, but to swear with levity by his name, exhibit many external signs of singular irritation, and public misery. They appear to have no resources in their own bosom. They depend on precarious externals, on the will and co-operation of others, for all their pleasures. CHANGE OF PLACE is their grand remedy for their uneasy sensations*. Like a sick man,

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* Lucretius well describes this restlessness:

Commutare locum, quasi onus deponere possit.
Exit sæpe foras magnis ex ædibus ille.
Esse domi quem pertæsum est, subitoque revertit;
Quippe foris nihilo melius qui sentiat esse.
Currit agens mannos ad villam; hic præcipitentur

who turns from sids to side on his bed, in hope of that sleep which his fever denies, they fly to various scenes of public resort, in the midst of amusements, unamused; in the midst of pleasure, unpleased; and reluctantly return to their home, where God has given them a good inheritance. They have used, or rather abused, all their comforts. They are *glutted* with pleasure. Nothing has the grace of novelty to recommend it. Behold their dissatisfied countenances, and their artificial smiles, to hide them at the gay places of public amusement. Their appetite grown dull, this world affording no new joy, and the next never in their thoughts, they are, at first, the slaves of *folly*, and, at last, the victims of despair.

How different is it with him who has happily been tinctured with religion in his early age, and learned to seek, as his chief good, "the peace of God, which passeth all understanding?" *Great peace have they that love thy law**. I do not affirm that the Christian religion pretends, like the arrogant philosophy of the stoics, to place man out of the reach of evil, or to render him insensible of misery. A certain portion of evil and misery is to be the lot of every mortal; and wise purposes are effected by chastisement, when suffered to operate in its regular manner in the production of humility, godly sorrow, repentance, and amendment. But this I say, and am justified in the assertion by the scriptures of God, and by the experience of many pious

Auxilium tectis quasi ferre ardentibus instans:
Oscitat extemplo, tetigit cum limina villæ.
Aut abit in somnum gravis; atque oblivia quærit;
Aut etiam properans urbem petit, atque revisit.
Hoc se quisque modo fugit: at, quod scilicet, ut fit,
Effugere haud potis est, ingratis hæret, et angit.

LUCRETIUS.

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* Psalm cxix. 165.

believers, there is nothing which can lessen the evils of life so much, or teach a man to bear them with such fortitude, as a full dependence on God, and a habit of seeking pleasure in warm yet rational devotion. It will ever be found by those who *thus* seek it faithfully.

It is not, indeed, to be believed, but that God, whose Providence superintends the animal and vegetable world, and the inanimate creation, should watch over the spiritual with peculiar care, and conduct it by his immediate influence. A soul, therefore, which, by piety and charity, humbly endeavours to obey the revealed will of God, and to render itself acceptable to the eye which is too pure to behold iniquity without offence, will probably be sure of *peculiar* regard. No evil so great shall happen to it; no misfortune so heavy shall befall it, but that a way to escape shall be opened, or a supernatural power of bearing it afforded. A ray of sunshine will beam upon it from the fountain of spiritual light, when the world presents nothing but dark clouds. Like the Alpine mountain, the good and devout Christian rises above the clouds, and enjoys a glorious sunshine, which erring mortals below him cannot partake. He who enjoys the peace of God, may be said to resemble the halcyon, whose nest floats on the glassy sea, undisturbed by the agitation of the waves.

Men deem themselves fortunate in obtaining the patronage of a fellow-creature like themselves, elevated by the favour of a prince or by his own industry, above the common level. They feel themselves safe under his protection, from the evils of poverty. Yet what is the protection of man, of princes and nobles, to the protection of the Lord of Lords, the King of Kings, the Ruler of Princes? But the pious Christian believes firmly that he enjoys the unspeakable advantage. It is a continual feast to him. It is a perennial spring of living water. In adversity or prosperity, his CHIEF

GOOD remains like the mountain, which cannot be moved. It is the rock of ages, on which he builds the fair fabric of his felicity.

What is there, in all the pomp of the world, and the enjoyments of luxury, the gratification of passion, comparable to the tranquil delight of a *good conscience? It is the health of the mind.* It is a sweet perfume, that diffuses its fragrance over every thing near it without exhausting its store. Unaccompanied with this, the gay pleasures of the world are like brilliants to a diseased eye, music to a deaf ear, wine in an ardent fever, or dainties in the languor of an ague. To lie down on the pillow, after a day spent in temperance, in beneficence, and piety, how sweet is it! How different from the state of him, who reclines, at an unnatural hour, with his blood inflamed, his head throbbing with wine and gluttony, his heart aching with rancorous malice, his thoughts totally estranged from him who has protected him in the day, and will watch over him, ungrateful as he is, in the night season! A good conscience is, indeed, the peace of God. Passions lulled to sleep, clear thoughts, cheerful temper, a disposition to be pleased with every obvious and innocent object around; these are the effects of a good conscience; these are the things which constitute happiness; and these condescend to dwell with the poor man, in his humble cottage in the vale of obscurity. In the magnificent mansion of the proud and vain, glitter the exteriors of happiness, the gilding, the trapping, the pride, and the pomp; but in the decent habitation of piety is oftener found the downy nest of heavenly peace; that solid GOOD, of which the parade of the vain, the frivolous, and voluptuous, is but a shadowy semblance.

I see a crowd, travelling, by *choice*, on the Sunday, (the day of rest appointed for man and beast, by the benevolent being who made them,) with a speed that almost outstrips the wind. Whither are they hastening? To the regions of delight; some place of modish resort; where the sound of the viol invites; where the song, and the dance, and the festive board, promise pleasure without alloy. Join the train awhile, and mark the event. The variety of objects dissipates care for a short time; but weariness soon ensues, and satiety converts the promised pleasure to indifference, at least, if not to pain. And now they return to their *home*, the seat of plenty, with countenances that by no means express *satisfaction* at what is just past; that satisfaction which might have been expected, considering the preparation, the expence, the haste, and the eagerness, which appeared in the commencement and progress of the fashionable excursion. Piety, charity, domestic comfort, have all been sacrificed at the shrine of Fashion; and the fickle, unfeeling deity has bestowed nothing in return, but weariness, languor, and a total disrelish of the pleasures of simplicity, the sweets of innocence, the feast of benevolence, and the enlivening ardour of devotion.

To contrast the scene, I picture a regular, respectable, religious *family*, spending their time, after the performance of their social, public, or professional duties, around the domestic fire-side, in peace and love. Every countenance is illuminated with cheerfulness. No tedium, no exhausted spirits, no *pale*, ghastly visages, from the vigils of the card-table; no envious feelings, no jealousy nor rage at the sight of superior splendor. Pleased with a well-spent day, they fall on their knees before they retire to repose, and thank the Giver of all comfort for the mercies already received; and pray, with humble confidence, for protection in the night, and continuance of mercy during the remainder of life. Cheerful and refreshed, they rise in the morning, and go forth to the labours of life, chanting the carols of pious gratitude. Here is enjoyment of existence; this is life indeed*, with a perpetual relish; not attended with the tumultuary ardours of a fever, but the gentle, pleasant warmth of sound health.

You, therefore, who, blessed by Providence with profusion of wealth, are enabled to make *pleasure* your constant pursuit, *try the experiment*, whether *pleasure* of the purest kind is not to be drawn from the fountains of piety and divine love. Amusements and pleasures, commonly so called, are not to be rigidly renounced. They are not only allowable, but desirable and useful; solacing poor human nature in its sorrows, and promoting, by temporary relaxation, the energies of virtue. But surely it is possible to retain religious principles inviolate, and to be uniformly actuated by religious sentiments, in a life occasionally diversified by cheerful, and moderate, and innocent amusements. Only *keep your heart with all diligence.* Let your imagination be pleased; your thoughts occasionally diverted; but let your *heart* be unseduced from the love of him who first loved you. Let your affections still point, like the needle to the north, wherever the vessel is blown by the winds, towards God. Your hands may be employed, in the avocations of social life and civil society: but let your *heart* be at leisure for the things which belong unto your peace; which will render your life constantly cheerful, and your death as little painful as the struggles of nature will admit.

It is never improper to caution the Christian, who seeks the *peace of God*, against such a degree of *impassioned religion* as tends by its *violence*, to destroy all true devotion, or to abbreviate its continuance. There certainly are religious persons, who, through the disorder of their imaginations, and weakness of judgment, seem not to enjoy that *tranquility*, or *peace of God*, which religion is caculated to produce.

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* *Hoc est vivere.*

Gentleness and moderation contribute to the increase as well as duration of our most refined enjoyments. We see nothing of extreme rigour, nothing of unnatural austerity, nothing of intemperate ardour, in the devotion of our Saviour or his disciples; so that they seem to be no less repugnant to the gospel, than to reason and philosophy. Nothing *violently* passionate is durable; no, not even the *ecstacies* of religion. Violent passion is like a flood after great rains. However it may rush in torrents for a day, it will exhaust itself, and dwindle to the shallow stream, scarcely creeping within the banks of its natural channel.

The passions are the chief destroyers of our peace; the storms and tempests of the moral world. To extirpate them is impossible, if it were desirable. But to regulate them by habitual care, is not so difficult, and is certainly worth all our attention. Many men do evidently acquire a wonderful command of their passions, in the presence of their superiors, or when their temporal interest is concerned. And shall we not attempt it in the presence of God *dwelling in us*, and for an everlasting interest?

The task is facilitated by the grace of God, which certainly co-operates with man in every virtuous endeavour. To JESUS CHRIST, then, let us have recourse, as to the best philosopher. He who said to the sea, "Be still," will calm our passions, as he smoothed the waves. Peace was the legacy which he left to his followers. Hear his bland and soothing words: "Peace "I leave with you; my peace I give unto you; not as "the world giveth give I unto you." "The work of "righteousness," says Isaiah, "is peace; and the effect "of righteousness, quietness and assurance forever." "Grace and peace be multiplied unto you," says St.

Peter, "through the knowledge of God, and of our Lord "Jesus Christ."

"Not as the world giveth," says our Saviour, "give "I peace." The world speaks peace, when there is no peace. Dissipation, variety of worldly business, worldly cares, worldly company, riot, noise, intemperance, produce a TUMULT, which banishes reflection, but cannot cause serenity, self-possession, and composure. The sick man, who has recourse to *opium* and strong drink to lull his malady in a deceitful oblivion, increases his pain and his danger.

The Christian seeks *peace*, by seeking pardon of God by repentance. "Acquaint thyself with God, and be "at peace." He seeks peace, by keeping a watch on those great destroyers of it, his passions. On these tumultuous waves he pours the oil of Christian love, and they are calm. Thus he lives;—at peace with himself, at peace with his neighbour, and at peace with his God.

Thus he lives; and when he quits this earthly scene,—(like a river, whose banks are flowery, and whose waters limpid and smooth,)—he glides, unruffled, into the ocean of eternity. Go, then, gentle Spirit, to the realms of peace, and enjoy the peace of God!—in the bosom of *thy* father, and *our* father*. *Very pleasant hast thou been unto us*†, during the time of thy sojourning here. Dove-like were thy manners; for the Spirit, which descended like a dove, inspired thee with every amiable disposition, and above all, with the LOVE OF PEACE, national and public, as well as internal: and BLESSED ARE THE PEACE-MAKERS; theirs shall be the peace of God which passeth all understanding, in the KINGDOM of HEAVEN.

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* John, xx. 17. † 2 Sam. i. 26.

In the kingdoms of the *earth*, indeed, there is seldom any lasting peace. What Christian but must drop a tear over the fertile realms of Christendom crimsoned with human blood; shed at the instigation of the spirit of APOLLYON, or the DESTROYER, taking his abode in hearts which have rejected the HOLY GHOST, the spirit of love, the God of peace! May the rulers of the world *receive the Spirit of Christ*, and heal the wounds of the PEOPLE; so shall they experience, in the hour of their own distress, the peace of God which passeth all understanding, and their crowns shall be immortal.

SECTION LVIII.

General Reflections on HAPPINESS—ERRORS in the Pursuit of it—No sublunary *Happiness perfect.—Christ's invitation to the wretched.—CHRISTIAN PHILOSOPHY affords the highest earthly Satisfaction.—Its SUMMUM BONUM is a State of GRACE, or the Enjoyment of divine Favour.*

TO what purpose are laboured declamations on the misery of man? He can want no studied proofs of a wretchedness which he sees in others, and feels in his own bosom. To expatiate on the symptoms of a disease, without pointing out a cure or an alleviation, is only to add to the pain, by increasing the impatience of the sufferer.

After all the melancholy pictures of human life, it must be allowed, that there is much comfort in the world, blended with its misery. Look abroad, from the library into real life, and you will see a general appearance of cheerfulness. Though clouds intervene, sunshine predominates. The labourer and mechanic chant over their daily toil; and though they pause to wipe the sweat off their brow, return to their work, after a short but hearty meal, and the sweetest slumbers, not only without a murmur, but with alacrity.

The prospect of reward at the close of a laborious day, the vicissitudes of rest and labour, the succession of ideas in active employment, the warmth and agitation of the animal spirits consequent on exertion, superinduce a delightful oblivion of care, and render the state of those who are supposed to be the least happy, the poor and laborious, frequently most pleasurable.

Nor let the higher ranks among us be enviously and malignantly misrepresented. Many in the *higher* ranks devote their time to business and pleasure *alternately*, and though *the harp and the viol, the tabret, and pipe, and wine, are in their feasts;*[*] yet some of them, guided by prudence, moderation, and piety, take a delight, at the same time, *in regarding the work of the Lord, and considering the operation of his hand;*[†] suffering neither *pleasure* nor business to interrupt their endeavour to improve in grace, and to exercise themselves in works of devotion and charity. With respect to CHARITY, which distinguishes this age and nation above all the nations on the face of the earth, by whom are the great establishments for all infirmities and casualties raised and supported, but by the rich and noble, by successful men in business, who most benevolently endeavour to communicate the happiness to which they were born, or with which Providence has blessed their exertions? Happy in themselves, they endeavour to deserve or sanctify their prosperity, by imitating him who gave it, in acts of most disinterested *beneficence*. For a proof of this, look into our public diaries, and the registers of great charities; and see how eagerly the rich and great *contribute* to their support.

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[*] Isa. v. 12. [†] Ibid.

So that, upon the whole, there is certainly an *appearance* of goodness and of joy on the face of human affairs; and this appearance, in many cases, is, most certainly, supported by reality. The world abounds with good as well as evil. Our disposition and discontent too often poison and embitter the rich repast.

It is indeed evident that there is more good than evil in the world. Plenty is certainly more common than scarcity; health than sickness; ease than pain. And this is so far confirmed by experience, as to render the descriptions of human misery, which we read in declamatory harangues, worthy of little credit and attention. Few, *comparatively*, know what it is to be completely miserable. Who of us, in this country, does not every day enjoy some solid comfort? A vast majority is warmly clothed, plentifully fed, and accommodated with a house for shelter, and a bed for repose.

Yet let the balance be held evenly. There is, we all experience, an abundance of evil in the world; and it is aggravated and actually increased by fear, and the activity of a lively imagination.

It is true also, that the best of our pleasures and enjoyments are rather amusive, than perfectly and durably satisfactory. For who ever declared himself, in the midst of grandeur, pleasure, opulence, happy to the utmost extent of his wishes? Who but, in some moments, has felt a sentiment of discontent? Who ever said, " I am now in that settled state of enjoyment and " perfect contentment, that I conceive not a wish of ad-" dition to it; I look not to a future day for an increase; " I acquiesce; free at once from hope and from fear?" An involuntary sigh rises in the height of our prosperity.

I shall think myself not uselessly employed in the endeavour to discover the causes of man's failure in search of satisfaction. What is it that dashes his sweetest and most plentiful cup with a bitter mixture?

In the first place, man raises his expectations too high; beyond what nature and experience justify; when he ventures to promise himself any happiness without defect, and without abatement; a sun without spot; a sky without a cloud. The world is not our home. The world is now old; and the experiment of attaining to perfection of happiness has been tried by every individual that ever existed in it. Many have left on record an account of their experiments, and a uniform avowal of disappointment. He, therefore, that would taste the happiness allowed to human nature, must learn to take aim at marks within his reach, to be duly sensible of little advantages and common blessings, daily exemption from evil, from pain, from debt, from extreme want, from infamy, from exile, from imprisonment. How much happier is he who has a sufficiency of food, of raiment, a comfortable house, and a warm bed, than millions of the human race, in savage climes! Yet these things are little thought of by those who murmur at the evils of life, and pine with the misery of their own situation. Something unpossessed still torments; yet all wish to APPEAR happy.

Many things which, in the midst of our complaints, we possess and enjoy in security, would perhaps render half our fellow-creatures rapturously delighted, though they, who were born to them, pay them not the least attention, in the eagerness of reaching after something *more*, something *highter*, something *better*, to be enjoyed at a *future* day; that day, which never comes, to mortal man. The possession of our SENSES entire, of our limbs uninjured; of knowledge and skill, of friends and companions, is often overlooked, though it would be the ultimate wish of many, who, as far as we can judge, deserve it as much as ourselves.

Men always compare themselves with those who are above them, without once looking into the vale below, where thousands stand gazing at them with envy and admiration. By this unfortunate comparison, their own good things lose much of their value in their own esteem, and sometimes become totally insipid.

When we consider the number and variety of evils, almost intolerable, in the life of man, we should learn to esteem every disaster incident to human nature, which has not yet fallen to our lot, as a just cause of self-congratulation, complacency, and gratitude. But through ENVY, we turn from the misfortunes of others; and think only of those advantages which give them a superiority over our own condition. If we see a man deaf, or dumb, or blind, or lame, or poor, or in disgrace, we do not derive comfort from the consideration of our own exemption from his defects and calamities; but if we observe another adorned with beauty, endued with strength, elevated to a high rank, or loaded with riches, we secretly repine that we have not been equally blessed with worldly prosperity.

But let us consider how many there are, who would envy every one who has but health and liberty. Go into an hospital. Visit a poor-house. Inspect a prison. Compare your own health, your own competency, your own liberty, hard as you deem your lot, with the friendless wretch, who lies in the agony of pain, or languor of disease, with no help but the cold hand of OFFICIAL charity. No kind relative to sooth with his bland voice, to close his eyes, and shed a tear on his departure. Compare your lot with his who is loaded with chains, where the iron enters his soul, in a cold and damp dungeon. Compare it with that of your poorer neighbours, at the next door. Compare it with that of all the sons and daughters of affliction, a large family—every where to be found.

Men are, indeed, too apt to despise what are called little advantages, common comforts, daily pleasures, hourly conveniencies; whereas they are often of the highest importance; as the general happiness of life is usually made up of particulars, which appear minute, but the sum of which makes a great total.—We wait till to-morrow to be happy; alas! why not to-day? Shall we be younger? Are we sure we shall be healthier? Shall we see better, hear better, taste better? Look at some aged miser and judge. Then why, in the name of reason, cannot we be happy to-day, with a competency and a clear conscience?

We are unwilling to be satisfied with the pleasures of simplicity, and the delights of nature. The beasts around us are contented. The lark soars, and sings in exultation; but man, forgetful of nature, must have recourse to *art*, to procure satisfaction; and things seem to have little relish, which are not seasoned by difficulty of attainment. The greater part of worldlings, especially gamesters, esteem mere tranquility of mind, and ease of body, a state of insipidity.

But, considering the number of evils in life, man should learn to esteem every one which he has escaped, a just cause of self-congratulation and of gratitude. The absence of evil is a real good. Peace, quiet, exemption from pain, should be a continual feast. The aching of a tooth may deprive us of all complacency in the midst of plenty and magnificence. A fit of the gout or stone may make a crown of gold and emeralds, a crown of thorns. Then while we have no pain, no ach, no sickness, why do we not enjoy our tranquility with pious exultation?

Here seems to be the grand error. There is a more general desire to *appear* happy, than to *be* so. Men live in the eyes of their neighbours. They wish to possess a *glittering* happiness, careless of its solidity. They are desirous of being *envied*, *talked of;* and, in reaching after the shadow, they drop the substance.

Such, and many more, are the mistakes of men, *in the pursuit of happiness.* They all originate from a desertion of truth and simplicity; from a neglect of God and grace; from vanity, pride, folly, and vice.

But even the wise, the virtuous, the religious, and the comparatively happy, are still no more than *men;* and, being men, are subject to much *real* misery, to bodily pains, diseases, infirmity, decay, and worldly losses and crosses. The gardens of the world produce only deciduous flowers. Perennial ones must be sought in the delightful regions of Heaven. Roses without thorns are the growth of Paradise alone.

Thither then let us repair. And happily, we are called by an invitation, no less urgent than kind and merciful. "Come unto me," says a friendly voice, "all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will "give you rest."* Let us consider the words properly, and allow them their full weight upon our hearts. The Redeemer of mankind, commissioned from the Creator, utters, from his own mouth, the gracious summons, "Come unto me." As if he had said:

"Your own wisdom, your own endeavours, unassisted, "are insufficient to secure your happiness, and rescue "you from misery. *Come unto me, all ye that labour "and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest.*" And who is there among us that does not labour? and who is there that is not heavy laden? and who does not want rest in the pilgrimage of life? The burden of our sins, the burden of our diseases, the burden of our years, press heavily on us, and gladly would many resign their lives in weariness, if there were no danger of a world unknown; where heavier burdens may await him who impatiently throws down the load of life.

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* Matt. xi. 28.

Thanks be to God that Jesus Christ will either lighten our load, or give us strength to bear it. He has reconciled us to God; he has taught us to consider our Maker as our friend and father; and that all things will work together for our good. "Who will shew us any GOOD?"* Jesus Christ *has* shewn us our SUPREME GOOD.

At his departure from us, he left us not alone; but sent his comforter to us—the Holy Spirit of God; who will continue with all true Christians, even to the end of the world. It is he who preserves a lively, energetic devotion in us; and not only sanctifies and comforts, but illuminates our souls with the beams of grace. The *happiness* of man, after all that has been said upon it, depends upon a participation of this holy assistance; upon the divine paraclete, the God of consolation: and the *misery* of man is SPIRITUAL DESERTION.

Here then let us rest. Adieu to the distraction of philosophy; the never-ceasing disputes of unassisted reason; the dogmatical decisions of learned pride and empty vanity. To be happy, we must be blessed with the Holy Spirit. In adversity, in prosperity, in sickness, and in health, our joys will be pure, our sorrows lightened with this holy emanation of the Deity in our bosoms. Natural evil we must feel; moral evil, and its effects, we shall often experience; but there will still remain in our hearts, if regenerated, a cordial drop, a source of sweet enjoyment, of which no external circumstances can utterly deprive us.

The method of obtaining this blessing, is to perform our duty to ourselves, our neighbours, and our God, with pure hearts, and a sincere desire to conform to the will of our Maker. Much time must be given to devotion; more to the offices of charity; much to works of industry in our calling or profession; while some may be indulged to innocent diversion. The heart will thus be renovated, and that change produced in our dispositions, which is termed, in scripture, the becoming a *new man;* and, in the language of theology, *regeneration.*

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* Psalm iv. 6.

Little do they know, who are involved in the continual hurry and dissipation of the world, of this wonderful change in human nature, and its hightening effect on the enjoyment of life. Business and diversions can afford no delight comparable to the sweet sensations of a *soul composed* and *tranquillized* by divine grace. In this state, a charming serenity diffuses itself over the mind, which becomes like those happy climes of poesy, where every breeze is gentle as a zephyr, the spring perpetual, and the earth teems, at the same time, with flowers of the finest hue, and fruits of the most delicious flavour. Nothing sublunary, indeed, is perfect; but there is every reason to believe, that the state of the regenerated Christian approaches as nearly to the bliss of Heaven, as it is possible, while the soul is encumbered with a mortal body.

We set out in search of happiness, and here we have found it. The question "who will shew us any good?"* is now answered. The CHIEF GOOD of man is a state of grace. Other pretentions to it are like shadows to the substance; which they may resemble in shape, while they want its essence, its duration, its solidity. What we have found, let us never lose. Let us build upon a rock. Let us daily grow in grace, and in the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. Thus shall our happiness in this life, founded, as it will be, in piety, virtue, and the consequent favour of God, rise to more perfect happiness in a future state, where the passions and appetites of a mortal body shall not weigh down the pure ethereal Spirit that, in its *present* state, with wings all too feeble, continually aspires at its native clime.

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* Psalm iv.

Come then, ye who have wandered like bleating sheep, distressed and famished, without a shepherd, come to Jesus Christ, to the shepherd of your souls, who shall feed you in a green pasture, and by the river side. Come unto him, for he calls you, all ye that labour, and are heavy laden, and he shall give you rest; rest, in your passage through this turbulent scene; and not only rest, but fulness of joy at his right hand, when your wearied bodies shall lie down in the peaceful grave.

SECTION LIX.

Apologetical Conclusion; with a Recapitulation, and Addition of a few Particulars respecting the preceding Subjects.

THE world, on a superficial view of it, presents an appearance of gaiety. Deeply engaged in the pursuit of gain, honour and amusement, few men would lament, like Calypso in Telemachus, if they were immortal, and doomed to remain, in everlasting youth and health, on this lower orb, wretched as it is represented. But as all are conscious that this is impossible, the next endeavour is to drown thought in the whirlpools of dissipation. Most persons, however, choose to be called Christians, and would be not a little disgusted with the officious monitor, who should venture to suggest to them that, as they seldom or never bestow on Christianity the least solicitude, they can have no just pretentions to the name.

But busy as men are, in pursuits foreign to piety, it is certain, that after a few short years, the principal concern of the proudest, bravest, and fairest of the sons and daughters of Adam, will be *religion.* To that friend, whom many slight in the season of youth, health, and prosperity, they will (secretly, perhaps, but eagerly) fly for succour, in the time of age, sorrow, sickness, and death. What indeed, is man, in his most flourishing state? What, the most admired, and distinguished individual of us all, but an infirm, dependent creature, subject, from the cradle, to ten thousand evils; doomed gradually, often painfully, to decay, and certainly, perhaps most deplorably, to die? Second childhood, idiotism, insanity, palsy, blindness, deafness, lameness! ye are powerful preachers to those who mark well your ravages among the sons of men, once most highly distinguished for strength, comeliness, genius, all that charms the heart, and dazzles the imagination with transient brilliancy.

" Think, mortal," says the poet, " what it is to die." Think also, I add, what it is to see those whom we love, die before us; die, agonized with pain, after languishing with lingering disease; to attend them, with all the blandishments of affection, without being able to contribute to their ease, or add one moment to their existence. Is there any partaker of human nature, however thoughtless, who, when he feels, actually brought home to his own bosom, or to his family, the real calamities, the sore distresses of life, will not be anxious to seek comfort of religion, to acquaint himself with God, and be at peace with him? His prospect in the world is forlorn and dismal. It is a barren land, where no water is. Though it flattered him in better days, it now turns away from him in the hour of his utmost need. Indeed, if it were still inclined to sooth him, it has no cordials for his heart, no balsams for his wounded spirit. To Heaven only he can look for comfort*, and there he will not seek it in vain. Religion has confessedly furnished a sweet solace, under extreme affliction, when the heart sickened at the pleasures of the world, and viewed its

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* As examples of men *well known*, and recently in the land of the living, teach more effectually than any precepts and admonitions, I have selected the two following, to shew how men of the world and men of pleasure are affected by disease and the decays of age.

The following verses, a translation of a Psalm, by the late Mr. COLMAN, who had been much conversant with the gay world, exhibit the state of mind to which the liveliest wits and men of fashion may be reduced, on a sudden, by sickness, by a STROKE OF THE PALSY, or any other malady.

"Psalm the 39th imitated in blank verse:

" I will take heed, I said, I will take heed,
" Nor trespass with my TONGUE; will keep my mouth
" As with a bridle, while the sinner's near.
" —Silent I mus'd, and e'en from good refrain'd,
" But full of pangs, my heart was hot within me;
" The lab'ring fire burst forth, and loos'd my tongue.
" Lord, let me know the measure of my days:
" Make me to know how weak, how frail I am!
" My days are as a span, mine age as nothing,
" And man is altogether vanity.
" Man walketh in an empty shade; in vain
" Disquieting his soul, he heaps up riches,
" Knowing not who shall gather them. And now
" Where rests my hope, O Lord! it rests with thee.
" Forgive me mine offences! Make me not
" A scorn unto the foolish! I was dumb,
" And open'd not my mouth, for 'twas thy doing.
" O, take thy STROKE away! thy hand destroys me.
" When, with rebukes, thou chastenest man for sin,
" Thou mak'st his beauty to consume away:
" Distemper preys upon him, as a moth
" Fretting a garment. Ah, what then is man?
" Ev'ry man living is but vanity!
" Hear, hear my prayer, O Lord! O hear my cry!
" Pity my tears! for I am in thy sight

pageantries with contempt. Bitterer than worm wood has been the cup of adversity; but religion has infused a honied drop into it, which has overcome the bitterness: gloomy as midnight has been the lowering sky,

" But as a stranger and a sojourner,
" As all my fathers were. O, spare me then,
" Though but a little, to regain my strength,
" Ere I be taken hence, and seen no more!" COLMAN.

Let us hear also LORD CHESTERFIELD, a complete man of the world. The following is an extract from one of his letters:

" I have run," says he, " the silly rounds of business and pleasure, and have done with them all. I have enjoyed all the pleasures of the world, and consequently know their futility, and do not regret their loss. I appraise them at their real value, which is, in truth, very low. Whereas those that have not experienced, always over-rate them. They only see their gay outside, and are dazzled with the glare. But I have been behind the scenes. I have seen all the coarse pullies and dirty ropes which exhibit and move the gaudy machines; and I have seen and smelt the tallow candles which illuminate the whole decoration, to the astonishment and admiration of the ignorant audience.

" When I reflect on what I have seen, what I have heard, and what I have done, I can hardly persuade myself that all that frivolous hurry of bustle and pleasure of the world had any reality; but I look upon all that is passed, as one of those romantic dreams, which opium commonly occasions; and I do by no means desire to repeat the nauseous dose, for the sake of the fugitive dream.

" Shall I tell you that I bear this melancholy situation with that meritorious constancy and resignation which most people boast of? No; for I really *cannot help it*. I bear it, because I must bear it, whether I will or no!—I think of nothing but killing Time the best way I can, now that he is become my enemy.— It is my resolution to SLEEP *in the carriage during the remainder of the journey*."

"You see," says Bishop Horne, remarking on this passage, " in how poor, abject, and unpitied a condition, at a time when he most wanted help and comfort, the world left him and he left the world."

but religion has tinged the clouds with gold and purple, and opened a prospect of the blue expanse.

But what religion? There is no religion but the Christian, which, in the present state of society, can make any claim to general reception. There is none but the Christian which can afford the smallest consolation. Explode Christianity, as some pretenders to benevolence seem to wish, and you rob the blind of their surest guide, and the wretched, of their best friend and protector. You take away the staff of age, the chart and compass of youth, the pillow of pain, the grand column and ornament of human life. Man degenerates, without it, to a brute of superior sagacity to do mischief, and superior sensibility to suffer pain.

But there are many, and those able and distinguished men in the business of the world, who appear to reject Christianity entirely. Many give it no attention*; but contented with the decencies of life, and, coldly complying with the outward forms, claim a merit in submitting quietly to its ordinances, and making no open opposition to it. Others profess to believe all religions equally true, equally false, and equally useful to the politician. Most of these are probably driven, at last, by their distress, in the evil days, and in the anguish of their hearts, to seek the aid of her, whom they despised or neglected

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Compare these words with those of another person, who took his leave of the world in a very different manner.

" I am now ready to be offered, and the time of my departure
" is at hand. I have fought a good fight; I have finished my
" course; I have kept the faith; henceforth there is laid up for
" me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous
" Judge, will give me at that day." St. PAUL.

* They know nothing about it, and therefore cannot desire or study it. IGNOTI NULLA CUPIDO.—The people perish through lack of knowledge. Hosea, iv. 6. The Indians prefer any bauble, which rattles and looks fine, to their mines of gold.

in prosperity, and to take refuge, during the storm, in the shelter of the temple. But is it not desirable, in every stage of life, to be under the protection of one, who is found so faithful a friend in the last stage? And is it not the part of every truly benevolent man, if opportunity offer, and more particularly, if his PROFESSIONAL DUTY not only justifies, but demands, an active interference in promoting the solid happiness of others, to endeavour to persuade his fellow-creatures to seek, in the most effectual manner, the light and consolation of Christianity? He can in no possible mode contribute so much to the melioration of society, and the improvement of the human race. Look at a neighbouring country, and see the misery consequent on renouncing Christianity. Mercy and Justice seem to have fled from the land, together with the Gospel. God hath avenged his cause in a most awful manner.

To stop the progress of infidelity, to resuscitate the dormant spirit of vital religion, the true nature of Christianity must be plainly pointed out to the mass of the people, the GREAT as well as the vulgar; the GREAT, I say, to whom, from thoughtlessness, and immersion in sensuality, it is often little known*, however it may be professed. Christianity, indeed, it may be suspected, is too imperfectly understood, even by scholars, philosophers, and statesmen of the first rank, and the greatest celebrity†.

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* What is the GOSPEL? "The record that God hath given to "us eternal life, and that life is in his son." 1 John, v, 2. It is a question of prime importance. Yet there are able men, and men of singular address and dexterity in all political and commercial *business*, who perhaps never asked the question with seriousness; and who seem to be merely novices, or downright Ignoramuses, in the school of Christ.

† Let such persons consider the *œconomy of grace*, as thus briefly displayed by Bishop Warburton, who nevertheless, was a great

To call the attention of men to Christianity, and to render its true genius and nature *better known**, is the

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opposer of the true doctrines of divine energy; and who, on that account, may have the more weight with many.

"The blessed Jesus came into the world, to declare the good-will of our heavenly Father to the forfeited posterity of Adam. He testified the truth of his mission by amazing miracles; and sealed the redemption of mankind, by the more amazing devotion of himself to an ignominious death.

"But as the redemption, so generally procured, could only operate on particulars, under certain circumstances of faith and obedience, very repugnant to our corrupted nature, the blessed Jesus, on his leaving the world, promised his followers his intercession with the Father, to send another divine person—the Holy Ghost, called the *Spirit of Truth*, and the *Comforter*—who, agreeably to the import of those names, should *co-operate* with us in establishing faith, and in perfecting obedience; or, in other words, should sanctify us to redemption.

"This is a succinct account of the œconomy of grace; entirely consonant to our best conceptions of the nature of God, and the condition of man. For if man was to be reinstated in a free gift, justly forfeited, we cannot but suppose that as, on the one hand, it might be restored on what conditions best pleased the giver; so, on the other, God would graciously provide, that it should not be bestowed in vain.

"An atonement, therefore, was to be made for the offended majesty of the Father, and this was the work of the Son; and a remedy was to be provided for the miserable condition of man, which hindered the atonement from producing its effect; and this was the office of the Holy Ghost; so that both were joint workers in the great business of reconciling God to man.

"The office of the Holy Ghost is to ENLIGHTEN THE UNDERSTANDING, AND TO RECTIFY THE WILL."

Bp. WARBURTON.

This is the testimony of an adversary.

"The Christian that rejects, reproaches, and writes against the necessity of immediate divine inspiration, (as Warburton did,) pleads the whole cause of infidelity." LAW

* "In many countries *called Christian*, neither Christianity, nor its evidence, are fairly laid before men; and in places where both

scope of this little book; a book by no means intended to promote the interest, or gratify the pride, by any particular division or sub-division of Christians, but to serve the *common cause* of all human beings, by maintaining the divine origin, describing the real essence and energy, and diffusing the powerful efficacy of that SUBLIME PHILOSOPHY, which, under the immediate operation of an all-wise and benign Deity, promises to tranquillize life, and conduct man through paths of peace, to realms of eternal felicity.

What then is the principle of this philosophy, which gives it a decided superiority over all that has been taught in the groves of Academus, the Portico and the Lyceum? It is (as I hope has been evinced in the preceding pages) a BEAM OF LIGHT from the FATHER OF LIGHTS; a LUMEN DE LUMINE, LIGHT OF LIGHT; the breath of the power of God, restoring degenerate human nature to that image which it lost at the fall, and re-establishing it in primeval dignity. The Holy Ghost, it appears, is the divine Being, now and forever engaged in effecting this happy renovation; in producing a change, which no human wisdom could ever accomplish, without supernatural assistance, without that GIFT, which our Lord gave to men after his ascension.

The elegant refinements of human philosophy may furnish a pleasing amusement for those who possess the advantages of a classical education, and of literary leisure. The Christian Philosophy alone is calculated

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" are, there appear to be some, who have very little attended to
" either; and who reject Christianity with a SCORN proportionate
" to their INATTENTION; and yet are by no means without un-
" derstanding in other matters." Bp. BUTLER.

" I have been so long conversant with the classics," said Dr. Conyers Middleton, " that I grow *squeamish* when I come to the " scriptures."

for ALL mankind; this alone can bring peace* at the last; peace, during the continuance of life, as well as its close; a transcendent peace, called, in scripture, the *peace of God, which passeth all understanding;* and which certainly constitutes that SUPREME GOOD OF MAN, in selecting which, human philosophy could never yet finally agree. Happily, it is a kind of philosophy, to which every human being, consistently with God's equity, may attain; requiring not cultured intellect, nor a life of academical seclusion, but faithful, fervent prayer, accompanied with sincere, though imperfect obedience. " If ye, being evil," says our Saviour, " know how to give good gifts unto your children, how " much shall your heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit " to them that ask him?" Nothing is to be desired by mortal man, in comparison with this GIFT, *the supply of the Spirit of Jesus Christ*†. The END, it appears, to be pursued by this philosophy, is the attainment of the Spirit's influence; the MEANS, prayer and obedience. Such is the sum and substance of CHRISTIAN PHILOSOPHY; a title‡ which I have chosen, because, from a strange perverseness, a great part of the world, too often guided by names, is willing to listen to philosophy, while it closes the iron doors of prejudice against the voice of religion.

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* " I would," said the great GROTIUS, whose book, 'On the Truth of the Christian Religion,' is recommended to all young students, though, I believe, it never *convinced* any man living; " I " would," said he, a little before he died, " give all my learning " and honour, for the plain integrity and innocence of JEAN " URICK;" a poor illiterate neighbour of his, who spent much of his time in prayer, and was an honest plain man, and industrious in his calling. JOHN EDWARDS.

† Phil. i. 19.

‡ This name Christianity bears in the writings of some of the antient fathers. Thus *Justin Martyr*, speaking of Christianity, says,

" Εϛι τω οντι ΦΙΛΟΣΟΦΙΑ μεγιϛον κτημα ϗ τιμιωτατον
" Θεω, ωτε ϖροσαγει και συνιϛησιν ημας μουνη· ϗ οσιοι ως αλη-
" θως ουτοι εισιν οι φιλοσοφια τον νουν ϖροσεχη ϗ οτες."

Dialog. cum Tryph.

The divine energy announced to mankind in the glad tidings of the Gospel, under the name of GIFTS and GRACE, operating, now and for evermore, on every human heart prepared to admit it, appears, from what has been advanced in these pages, to be the LIVING, EVERLASTING GOSPEL, still accompanying the written word, and conveying illumination, sanctification, consolation. It would not cease to operate, being sent down from Heaven on our Lord's ascension, even if it were possible that ink and paper, by whose instrumentality the written word is transmitted, were utterly lost. It originates from Omnipotence, and cannot entirely rely, for its continuance or effect, on means merely human, weak, contingent and perishable. He who once views the gospel of JESUS CHRIST in this light; he who considers it as a

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He adds, that he found this philosophy, meaning the CHRISTIAN, the only philosophy that was useful and to be depended upon.

" *Ταυτην μονην ευρισκον Φιλοσοφιαν ασφαλητε ϗ συμφορον.*"

Dialog. cum Tryph.

Isidore also terms Christianity the NEW and evangelical philosophy.

" Η *νεα ϗ ευαγγελικη* ΦΙΛΟΣΟΦΙΑ." EPIST. *lib.* 4.

And in another place he calls it the heavenly philosophy.

" ΟΥΡΑΝΙΟΣ ΦΙΛΟΣΟΦΙΑ." EPIST. *lib.* 5.

Several other fathers call it the Christian Philosophy. *Vide* Sozomen. *Eccl. Hist. lib.* 5. *cap.* 12.

And let it be remembered, that,

" *Non tam discendo, quam* PATIENDO *divina,*
" MENS PERFICITUR HUMANA."

" *Homines ideo fallantur, quod aut religionem suscipiunt, omissâ*
" *sapientiâ, aut sapientiæ soli student, omissâ religione, cum alterum*
" *sine altero esse non possit verum.*"

LACTANTIUS *de falsa Sapient. lib.* 3.

vital influence from Heaven, and recognizes its energy on his heart, as he will do, in consequence of prayer and obedience, will want no other proof of the truth and excellence of Christianity. He will have the witness in himself; and stand in no need of the schoolmen's folios, the verbal subtleties of the critic, or the acrimonious disputes of the polemic. He will find, that some of the most learned men, the most voluminous writers on theological subjects, were TOTALLY IGNORANT OF CHRISTIANITY. He will find, that they were ingenious heathen philosophers, assuming the name of Christians, and forcibly paganizing Christianity, for the sake of pleasing the world, of extending their fame, and enjoying secular honours and lucrative pre-eminence*.

" Godly persons," that is, Christian philosophers, are described, in those articles which all churchmen have most solemnly assented to, as " such as FEEL in them- " selves the Spirit of Christ, mortifying the works of " the flesh, and *drawing up their minds to high and* " *heavenly things*." He who feels the Spirit in him, will be conscious of possessing the pearl of great price, and will lock it up in the sanctuary of his heart, as his richest treasure, never to be despoiled of it by the seducing arts of false philosophy; never to exchange that pure gold, which is the same yesterday, to-day, and forever, for the base metal of worldly politicians, who may endeavour, as they have done, to make truth itself alter her inimitable nature, to serve the varying purposes of temporary ambition. Those doctrines of Christianity, which were true under the first Charles, will be considered, notwithstanding the subtle attempts of politicians, equally true under the abandoned profligacy of a second; or in subsequent reigns, when it was discovered by the court divines, that Christianity *was as old as the creation*, and the religion of grace, a mere republication of the religion of nature*. The substance of Christianity can survive the wreck of empires, and demolition of temples made with hands, and the dismission of a superstitious or a time-serving priesthood. The living temple of the heart, where the Holy Spirit fixes his shrine, will stand unimpaired, amidst the fallen columns of marble. The kingdom of Heaven will remain unshaken, amidst all the convulsions of this changeable globe. We are told, that the gates of hell shall not prevail against it; and, though it should happen, in any country of Christendom, that the rulers should be infidels, and the visible church abolished; yet while there are human creatures left alive in it, the CHURCH of CHRIST may still flourish. The doctrine of grace is the only doctrine which tends to preserve Christianity in the world, independent of the caprice, and pride of statesmen* and philosophers, or the wickedness of the people. Who shall be impious enough to maintain that God cannot preserve, by his own methods, his own dispensation?

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* " There are those," says the apostle, " who seek THEIR OWN, " and not the things of Jesus Christ." PHIL. ii. 21.

Such as these are called by Ignatius χριστεμποροι, dealers and chapmen in *Christ*. *Unprofitable* TRUTHS they will have no more to do with, than traders with unsaleable commodities.

Bishop Horne says, " Those clergymen, who betray the cause " of their Master, in order to be promoted in the church, are guilty " of the worst kind of *simony*, and pay their souls for the purchase " of their preferment."

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* This, though the pious Sherlock's doctrine, is nearly the same with the infidel Voltaire's, though not quite so honourable to Christianity.

" *Notre religion revelee n'est meme, et ne pouvoit etre, que cette* " *loi naturelle perfectionee?*"

Discours sur le Theisme, par M. de *Voltaire*.

Of preaching *natural religion* for Christianity, let us hear the opinion of two other celebrated divines, and pious men.

" Scarce any thing," says Dr. Trapp, " has of late years been " more prejudicial to religion, than the neglect of the THEOLOGI- " CAL part of it, properly so called: and it is very greatly to be " lamented, that some writers, even of our own church, out of " an undue terror, in opposing some undue doctrines of Calvin, " have run into the other extreme, and have too little regarded " the necessary *doctrines of religion.*"

They have dwelt upon the *agenda*, and totally neglected the *credenda*.

" To preach *practical* sermons, as they are called, that is, sermons upon VIRTUES and VICES, without inculcating those " great scripture truths of redemption, GRACE, and the like, " which alone can incite and enable us to forsake sin, and follow " after righteousness—what is it but to put together the wheels, " and set the hands of a watch, forgetting the SPRING which is " to make them all go?"

Bishop HORNE *and* Dr. TRAPP, *in his Preface to " Preservative.*"

What Quintilian said, may be applied to moral preaching, when unaccompanied with evangelical.

Civil and ecclesiastical power in union, together with the assistance of early education, may, indeed, retain, in a nation, the forms and the name of Christianity; but "the proper force of religion, that force which subdues "the mind, which awes the conscience, and influences "the private conduct, as well as the public," will only be preserved by a vital experimental sense† of the divine

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"*Nunc vero quæ velut propria* philosophiæ *asserunter passim tac-* "*tamus* omnes: *quis enim modo de justo, æquo, ac bono, non et vir* "*pessimus loquitur.*" QUINT. Procemium.

* "With great worldly wisdom, there is always great pride, "the greatest adversary to true and sanctified Christian know- "ledge. All the skill that men so minded can attain to in heaven- "ly matters, is but like lessons got by rote. It must be quite "forgotten, or, at least, utterly renounced and laid aside, before "we can be admitted into the school of Christ."

Dr. JACKSON, Vol. 1. B. 2. C. 14.

† "Let it be considered that man, besides the benefit of reason "to direct him, is blessed with the advantage of something, if not

energy of the Holy Ghost, whom we declare, with one voice, in our churches, whenever we repeat the Nicene creed, to be the "LORD AND GIVER OF LIFE."

I have endeavoured to diffuse this vital, experimental sense, from a conviction that it is peculiarly desirable at a time when infidelity is said to increase, beyond the example of any former age. But I know that I oppose prejudices deeply rooted, and far extended. These doctrines are frowned upon by men in high stations*. I know that our Saviour has predicted, what experience has abundantly verified, that the preaching and teaching of the TRUE gospel, will ever create enemies in the world†. The modes of persecution differ in different periods; but, in all times, the defenders of *evangelical* truth are exposed to some mode or some degree of it. I know it well; yet, "Woe is me," may I and every preacher say, "if I preach not the gospel‡;" the true gospel; such, at least, as, after the most careful search and long consideration, it appears to my imperfect understanding, and such as I believe it to be in my SOUL. I only desire the adversary, if any such should arise, to allow the possibility that he, as well as I and the many great men who

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"always equivalent, certainly not inferior to the highest refine-"ments of INSTINCT in lower animals: and from the same foun-"tain, I mean GRACE, the grace of God; which, if any one be "hardy, and UNPHILOSOPHICAL, and *unchristian* enough to deny, "I shall not attempt to confute him; only desire him to consider "calmly, whether it be more incongruous to suppose God *aiding* "and *directing* reasonable, but fallible beings, with his GRACE, "than brutes with INSTINCTS." DELANY.

* "These doctrines serve no end of *popular* learning, they help "no people to figure and preferment in the world, and are useless "to scholastic, controversial writers." LAW.

† But I must remember that, "the FEAR OF MAN bringeth a "snare;—but whoso putteth his trust in the Lord shall be safe." PROVERBS, xxix. 25.

‡ 1 Cor. ix. 16.

support me in my sentiments, may be mistaken! and to ask his own heart, whether he has hitherto studied the subject as a truly *humble*[*] Christian, a fallen, depraved, ignorant, and weak creature; merely as a scholar, critic, philosopher, logician, metaphysician, controversialist, or politician, contending for the glory of victorious disputation, or the rewards of a profession established and encouraged by the state.

If any clergyman[†] of the church of England should be disposed utterly to deny the doctrine of immediate grace, divine energy, and supernatural impulse, I would beg leave humbly and affectionately to remind him of the question proposed to him when he was ordained a minister of Christ, and the answer he then made, with every circumstance of religious solemnity, receiving the sacrament upon it, and thus evidently resting all his hopes of God's blessing on his sincerity.*

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[*] ANTONINUS taught, that the very first requisite to form a philosopher, was *αϖοϐοϐλειν οιησιν*, to throw away all CONCEIT of knowledge.

[†] The Rev. Thomas Edwards, Fellow of Clare Hall, Cambridge, after writing a learned and elaborate book against the doctrine of grace, is compelled, by the *force of truth*, at the conclusion of it, to make the following concessions:

"There are undoubtedly several passages which sufficiently shew, that the operations of the Holy Spirit are not to be entirely limited and confined to the extraordinary and miraculous gifts and endowments peculiar to the apostolic age; but, on the contrary, that it will, in all succeeding ages, be communicated, in a peculiar manner, to all those who may stand in need of it, in order to the discharge of their duty.

"I can therefore by no means give into their opinion, who, with the witty French Jesuit, look upon these supernatural workings of the Spirit upon the minds of man, as entirely visionary or chimerical: or, as he expressed himself, a mere NESCIO QUID, *(je ne sçai quoi). A tempore Augustini, vix ulla vox frequentior fruit voce,* GRATIA, *ubi sermo est de hominis ad saniorem mentem reditu et vi, cui is reditus debetur. Eâ tamen voce quid significetur, cum ab iis quæritur, qui eâ utuntur, nihil responsi perspicui ferre licet. Hinc factum ut in Galliâ, Jesuita festivi ingenii, non inficetè dixit, 'Gratiam illam divinam, quæ tantum strepitum, excitavit in scholis, et tam mirabiles effectus in hominum animis edit,* gratiam *illam adeo efficacem, et suavem simul, quæ de duritie cordis, illæsa arbitrii libertate, triumphat, nihil esse tandem, præter* NESCIO QUID.'

Clerici, Ars Crit. p. 2. s. 1. c. 8.

The question is, "Do you trust that you are inwardly "moved by the Holy Ghost, to take upon you this office "and ministry, to serve God, for the promoting of his "glory, and the edifying of his people?" "I TRUST so," replies the person to be ordained.

As the topic is rather invidious, and certainly concerns myself as well as any of them whom I have the honour to call my brethren in the profession, I will refer it to Bishop Burnet, to make remarks on the response to the interrogatory. "Certainly," says the truly able prelate, "the answer that is made to this, "ought to be well considered; for if any one says, 'I "trust so,' that yet *knows nothing* of any such motion, "and can give no account of it, he lies to the HOLY "GHOST, and makes his first approach to the altar with "a lie in his mouth; and that not to man, but to God. "Shall not God reckon with those who run without his "mission, PRETENDING that they trust they have it, "when perhaps they understand not the importance of

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"The general manner in which the Spirit operates upon men, "we may, I humbly conceive, suppose to be, by raising *such particular ideas, or making such particular impressions upon their "minds*, as may *influence them*," &c.

* "All *sacerdotal* power is derived from the Holy Ghost; and "they who do not acknowledge themselves under the Holy "Ghost's influence, acknowledge that they have no sacerdotal "power. Our Saviour himself took not the ministry upon him, "till he had this consecration."

We think too *lowly* of the priest's office in our age. Very great it is, under the energy of the Holy Ghost.

" it? nay, and perhaps some LAUGH at it, as an *enthusi-*
" *astical* question, who yet will go through the office.
" They come to Christ for the loaves; they hope to live
" by the altar and the gospel, how little soever they
" serve at one, or preach the other: therefore they will
" *say any thing* that is necessary for qualifying them to
" *(receive the loaves and fishes)*, whether true or false."
The Bishop's animadversion is severe; and every man's own conscience must whisper to him, in his own case, whether it be just and true.

One thing, however, is certain, and sufficient for my purpose. It is plain that persons who enter on the ministry, thus declare themselves to *believe* that they are under a supernatural *motion* or impulse, cannot *consistently* deny, or explain away, the main principle of my book, which is the reality of such a supernatural motion or impulse. They confess that, in their own persons, they believe they have experienced that divine energy of the Holy Ghost, which, I maintain, moves the mind to believe in Christ, and inclines the heart to all moral virtue.

If the sublime and comfortable doctrine of immediate grace were generally preached, the churches would be better frequented, and infidelity rare.* The common people, unspoiled by vain philosophy, hunger and thirst for the spiritual food which comes down from Heaven. Ought not their shepherds to feed them with such as is *convenient for them*, and to lead them from broken cisterns and barren lands, to the green pasture, and streams of living water? Who shall judge what is most convenient for them? a few individuals, or the million, directed, in their choice, by the concurrent guidance of the church, the liturgy, and the scriptures? It has been justly suggested, by a wit of antiquity, that the GUESTS, and not the cooks, are to judge of the taste and salubrity of the viands prepared for the table. Now the guests invited to the spiritual feast, appear, by their numerous attendance, to prefer the food which comes from above, the truly evangelical doctrine of grace. However unskilfully dispensed, the places of worship, where it is, or appears to be, dispensed at all, are thronged with multitudes, while other places are almost deserted. How are the churches crowded by young and *poor* persons, at confirmations; the whole of which office is founded, most evidently, on the doctrine of grace, and the Holy Spirit's actual interposition.

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* "We must carry this yet further than the bare believing that
" these things (the *doctrines* of Christianity) are TRUE; such a
" faith devils have. We must *make our people* understand, that
" this faith *purifies the heart* and *works by love;* and it only be-
" comes a SAVING and *justifying* faith, when upon our entering
" upon the practice of those rules that this religion prescribes, we
" FEEL A REAL VIRTUE *derived into us*, that makes us NEW
" CREATURES, and gives us such a VITAL PERCEPTION of the
" truth of the promises made us in it, that we receive these, as
" earnests of our inheritance, and so taste and see that God is
" gracious to us. This makes us LIVING STONES in the SPIRI-
" TUAL BUILDING." Bishop BURNET's *Charge.*

The following is the bishops prayer, in the office of confirmation: " Almighty and everlasting God, who " hast vouchsafed to *regenerate* these thy servants, by " by water and the Holy Ghost, and hast given unto " them forgiveness of all their sins; strengthen them, " we beseech thee, O Lord, with the Holy Ghost the " Comforter, and daily increase in them thy manifold " GIFTS OF GRACE, the spirit of *wisdom* and *understanding;* the spirit of counsel and ghostly strength; the " spirit of KNOWLEDGE and true godliness; and fill them, " O Lord, with the spirit of thy holy fear, now and for " ever." The bishop then laying his hands upon every one severally, says, " Defend, O Lord, this thy child, " with thy heavenly grace, that he may continue thine " for ever; and daily increase in thy Holy Spirit more

" and more, until he come unto thy everlasting king-" dom." He proceeds thus: " Almighty and everlasting " God, who *makest* us both to *will* and *do* those things " that be good and acceptable unto thy divine Majesty, " let thy Holy Spirit ever be with them; and so lead " them in the KNOWLEDGE and obedience of thy holy " word, that in the end they may obtain everlasting life. " Vouchsafe to direct, sanctify, and govern both our " hearts and bodies," &c.

Can any bishop who reads these words, or any parish priest who sends the young ones of his flock to hear them, *consistently* deny the doctrine of divine energy, or immediate grace?*

Exclusively of this sublime doctrine, the GOSPEL, considered merely as a book of morality, has not so great an advantage over the KORAN, as every Christian must wish and believe it to possess. Mahomet requires, in the KORAN, " the belief of one God, trust in him, " frequent prayer and fasting, *almsgiving* even to STRAN-" GERS, keeping of covenants, justice in dealings, pa-" tience in adversity; to honour father and mother, " and to maintain them if they are old and poor. He " forbids *usury*, bearing false witness, profane swearing, " and the murdering of infants, which had formerly been " common in Arabia." The MAHOMETAN also allows JESUS to be a prophet sent from God, and commissioned to be a great instructor, reformer, and SAVIOUR. I say, divest Christianity of the GIFT which our LORD gave to men, after his ascension, and the infidel will place Christ far below Socrates, Plato, Epictetus, Senaca, and rank him with Mahomet, or even in a lower class; since there are many who deem the Koran a very fine composition, far superior to the narratives of Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John, and to the epistle of Paul, the chief of the apostles.

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* Bishop Beveridge says, " A man may as soon read the letter " of the scripture without eyes, as understand the mysteries of " the gospel without GRACE."

Divest Christianity of the Spirit's energy, and you rob it of its appropriate, distinguishing, and exclusive excellence and glory. You place it among the *modes of superstition* which, at various times, have been encouraged by states, in order to facilitate the movements of the the political engine, in almost every country on the face of the globe. You make it the invention of man; and, as the invention of man, it will often be despised, in comparison with the philosophy which prevailed in the elegant schools of Athens and Rome, and which clothed its fine morality in all the seducing embellishments of a polished diction. The writings of Plato and Cicero will be preferred to those of the evangelists and and apostles, if the PEARL which enriches the plain compositions of the latter, above all that human ingenuity can contrive, be torn from its place. That PEARL is figuratively emblematic of the Holy Spirit's influence, the UNCTION from above.

The ray of divinity, the anointing of the Spirit, shed a heavenly effulgence on the page of the written gospel, which all human lights but faintly emulate. These are merely moons or satellites. Christianity is the sun of the system. I AM THE LIGHT OF THE WORLD, says Christ himself. Let us remember, that it is the inspiration that makes the oracle; not the priest or the shrine. Take away the spring from the time-keeper, and though the wheels are curiously contrived, and the gold in which it is cased, and the jewels with which it is adorned, may still be valuable, yet it will not longer be esteemed but as a costly toy, or looked at, by those who want information, with confidence. Thus the gospel will have no vital, converting effect, when considered only as an historical narrative, with moral precepts occasionally interspersed, but unaccompanied with the MINISTRATION OF THE HOLY SPIRIT*.

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* The *successful propagation* of the gospel could not be effected by the causes assigned by Mr. Gibbon, but must have been effected by the Holy Ghost. Is it not reasonable to believe that it may *now* be propagated and continued by the same means as at *first*—the powerful agency of Heaven? Let us hear a sensible writer on the subject.

"The sole adequate cause of the successful propagation of the "gospel is, according to the scriptures, the HOLY GHOST. It "will be well if his agency, in these polite and rational days, be "thought to deserve a moment's attention. Yet it is evident, "that there must be some cause for this wonderful phenomenon. "I shall not disgust the rational world, by supposing the agency "of any supernatural being in the affair, but that of the great "Author of Nature. Any Spirit inimical to him could not, pro"duce a *character* of such GOODNESS, but under his authority, "and by a power derived from himself. Even *miracles* cannot "*change the heart*, whatever effect they may have on the judg"ment; and the ruling providence of God, implying only an *ex"ternal government*, does not influence the will; as facts abun"dantly testify. All that is *rational* and *human* is totally unequal "to the task; nay, perhaps the most *sensible* of mankind, should "they *deign* to honour these sheets with their inspection, can "scarce bear the idea of a *real Christian* with patience. There "is an ENERGY more than human which produces this character; "and it remains that this must be the INFLUENCE OF THE HOLY "GHOST.

"The reader who will allow himself seriously to weigh this "subject, may see that *nothing short of this* could constitute ONE "REAL CHRISTIAN, in this or any other age of the church. Let "him consider, whether it is even possible for mere man to *invent* "such doctrines; much less to propagate them with any success, "in a world like this. A number of men, possessed of a sixth "sense, of which we had not the least idea, would find but few "brought over to their opinion that they were possessed of such "a sensation. Their pretensions would be construed into pride "or folly; but those whom the MOST HIGH should endow with "the *same sensation*, would easily believe. The application is "obvious.

For political and interested purposes, it may be talked of in churches and universities; it may be scholastically defended, and generally professed, and yet totally misunderstood and misrepresented. It will have no influence* on the hearts of men: no, not on the hearts of the

"Thus we have a *simple and obvious proof* of the truth of Chris-"tianity (the *propagation* of it by the influence of the Holy Ghost). "I fear, indeed, it will weigh but little with those who love not the "*real* Gospel. The generality will say, 'At this rate the majo-"rity of those who call themselves Christians, DO NOT EVEN "KNOW THEIR OWN RELIGION.' It is devoutly to be wished "that this were not the case; that even MANY THAT HAVE "WRITTEN ABLY IN DEFENCE OF CHRISTIANITY, HAD "THEMSELVES KNOWN ITS NATURE. Much of the advantage "which deism has gained had then been prevented; we should "have had more of the EXPERIMENTAL PROOF: and that scrip-"ture had been better known, 'He that believeth in the Son of "God, hath the witness in himself.' (1 John, v. 10.) Sceptical "doubts will vanish before stubborn facts. *Were the gospel* "*itself understood, little time need be spent on its* EVIDENCES. "One sight of the sun is sufficient to point out its glorious Au-"thor. In all things else, EXPERIENCE is allowed to be the best "schoolmaster; in religion only it is called enthusiasm." *Milner.*

* "Judas Iscariot knew Jesus Christ—all that he did—just in "the *same manner* (though much *better*) as a mere HISTORICAL "believer of the Gospel; a mere learned theologist. All know-"ledge of Christ, but that which is by divine inspiration, or the "new birth, is but as poor and profitless as the knowledge of "Judas Iscariot." LAW.

"The empty, letter-learned knowledge, which the natural man "can as easily have of the sacred scriptures and religious matters, "as of any other books or human affairs, being taken for *divine* "*knowledge*, has spread such darkness and delusion all over Chris-"tendom, as may be reckoned no less than a general *apostasy* from "the gospel state of divine illumination." IBID.

"The best ability of the natural man can go no farther than "*talk*, and notions, and opinions about scripture words and facts; "on these, he may be a great critic, an acute logician, a powerful "orator, and *know every thing of the scripture*, EXCEPT THE SPI-"RIT AND THE TRUTH." IBID.

very persons who thus talk of it, profess it, defend it; nor of those who read or listen to the most elaborate apologies, defences, and demonstrations*. Christ must be formed in the soul, before the soul can recognize the truth and efficacy of Christianity.

Nearly two thousand years have elapsed since the written Gospel was promulged; and it has appeared to stand in need of defences and apologies to this very hour. Nor have defences or apologies been deficient in number or in sagacity and erudition. Fabricius reckons up several hundred books in defence of the Christian religion. Diligent as he was, he has omitted many; and since his time, there has been a very considerable addition to the number. Yet the cause is said still to labour; and appearances justify the assertion. Accordingly, we have lately seen ingenious theologists, and excellent writers, called forth, by the exigencies of the times, in our own country, almost two thousand years after the origin of Christianity, and after all the preceding labours of divines, to display its *evidences*, as if it were the production of yesterday. Such a display is said to be more necessary than ever; and Europe has produced many excellent works of the kind. Such books furnish exercise for the schools. May they be efficacious, as they are learned and ingenious! May they carry conviction to the heart, produce a lively faith, and refute the gainsayers! If they should fail, their failure must not be attributed to any defect of abilities in their authors, but to the omission of the internal evidence of the Holy Spirit. They are, almost without exception, above the reach, and disgusting to the taste, of the multitude; and let it be duly remembered, that to mere human reason and human learning, the *infidel* is ever ready to oppose weapons from the same armoury. His heart must be pierced with the two-edged sword of the Spirit, before he will surrender to Faith the citadel of his own reason*.

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* "He who goes about to speak of the mystery of the Trinity, "and does it by words and names of man's invention, talking of "essences and existences, hypostases and personalities, priority "in co-equalities and unity in pluralities, may amuse himself, and "build a tabernacle in his head, and TALK something, he knows "not what; but the good man, that FEELS the POWER OF THE "FATHER, and to whom the SON is become wisdom, sanctifica"tion, and redemption, in whose heart the LOVE of the SPIRIT "OF GOD is shed abroad, this man, though he understands "nothing of what is unintelligible, yet he alone truly understands "the Christian doctrine of the *Trinity*."

Bp. TAYLOR, *on* John, vii. 17.

Miserable and disgraceful have been the rancorous disputes on the *Trinity;* a subject, one would think, which, if worldly sentiments did not interpose, might be discussed with perfect composure of temper. The enemy has triumphed, while Christians have been tearing each other in pieces on an Opinion.

"But rise; let us no more contend, nor blame
"Each other, blam'd enough elsewhere; but strive,
"In offices of love, how we may lighten
"Each other's burden, in our share of woe." MILTON.

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* The celebrated pamphlet, entitled, *Christianity not founded on Argument*, was certainly nothing more than a piece of irony. Nevertheless, many a truth is told in jest; and *ridentem dicere verum quid vetat?*

I allow that *Christianity is not founded on Argument;* and I make the concession willingly, because I know that it has a better foundation. Christianity is not built on sand; but, like the house of the wise, on the rock—even the rock of ages. I will quote the words of the ironical adversary, and let them avail as much as they can.

" *No man can say that Jesus is the Lord, but by the Holy Ghost.*
" Here is pointed out to us that great dictator and infallible guide
" we have been seeking for, and, indeed, the only character we
" can possibly think of, any way equal to such a province. It
" could be nothing less than *omniscience* and *omnipresence* itself;
" nothing but this inexhaustible fountain of all truth, that could
" be sufficient to such a demand; and he it is, the *promised* ora-

But however the works now alluded to may succeed in carrying conviction to the hearts of men, it is certain

"cle, who is to attend the charge of believers to the end of the "world; to keep alive his *divine light* constantly in their hearts; "not to teach them rudiments of logic, but to irradiate their souls "at once with a thorough conviction; and perform more by one "secret whisper, than a thousand clamorous harangues from the "schools. From the satisfaction consequent to the mind from "his performance of this great office, it is, that he is so eminently "styled the *Comforter;* as his operations are in another place very "strongly and significantly termed the *power of God unto Salva-* "*tion. He that believeth in the Son of God, hath the witness in him-* "*self.* In this sense it is, that we are properly styled the *temples* "*of the Holy Ghost;* the consecrated scenes of this constant resi- "dence, there ever personally present, and dispensing his certain "intelligences to the soul, which the apostle calls the *witnessing of* "*the Spirit with our Spirit.*"

"It were endless to recount all the innumerable passages through- "out the whole scripture, that concur in ascertaining the same "*supernatural* and all-sufficient source and origin of our faith, in "opposition to all the feeble aids and uncertain advices that rea- "son might possibly contribute to the purpose. For we may "observe, that in mentioning the principle of faith, we are always "informed, both what it is, and what it is not. *By grace ye are* "*saved, through faith, and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of* "*God. No man can come to me,* (says *Christ,*) *except it be given* "*him of my Father.*

"The motive which induces me to receive the mysterious truths "of the Gospel, is the peculiar grant and munificence of Heaven, "over and above the common privileges of our nature. It seems, "by the particular negatives every where so industriously dis- "persed through all the expressions which treat of this subject, "that it was apprehended that there might possibly happen, "amongst the unwary, some mistake on the occasion; and that "therefore, as it was an article of so great concern to have a just "notion of, the greatest imaginable care was taken, by the most "*precise* and *emphatical* terms that could be devised, to guard "against any such fatal consequence.

"But the strongest confirmation of all these positive and re- "peated revelations on the point, the plainest declaration and that different persons, in different ranks of life, with various degrees of natural sensibility and intellectual improvement will be struck, respectively, with different arguments, and actuated by diverse modes of persuasion. A learned defence or proof of Christianity, which is extolled by some, shall appear to others dull, lifeless, and totally foreign to the purpose. What is slighted by the few, may convince the many. On reading the book of the world, as a comment on the books of the library, and turning over the pages of experience, as a criterion of written wisdom, I think I have observed that critical and historical *evidence*, in Christian *theology*, however it may edify the scholar, has little or no good effect on the multitude. By them it is seldom attended to at all; very imperfectly understood when attended to; and, when both attended to and understood, more frequently raises doubts and suspicions, than produces *firm belief*, and that HOLY FRAME of mind which regulates the conduct of life, and supplies a heartfelt satisfaction. The poor, who are the major part of human beings, in all ages and countries, and to whom our Saviour particularly addressed his preaching, seldom know that books

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" direction what *kind* of *evidence* Christians were always to trust " to and rely on, for the information and assurance of their minds, " we may find summed up, in brief, in their Master's last instruc- " tions at parting. The Spirit of Truth which proceedeth from " *the Father, he shall testify of me.* As we have both the same " person and commission elsewhere again specified. *The Spirit,* " *whom I shall send, shall lead you into all truth.*

" But, not to stand forever transcribing particulars, I refer " you once more to the GREAT ORIGINAL, which will, I think, " readily save us, both all farther trouble in quotations and com- " ments, and abundantly evince, in opposition to all the evasive " constructions which may be imposed on particular passages, that " HE (the SPIRIT) was in general, to INSPIRE CONVICTION as " well as *holiness;* and to ILLUMINATE as well as SANCTIFY " our hearts."

of critical theology exist, and would certainly never become Christians, or have a just idea of what is meant by Christianity, if they were not addressed in a manner more *authoritative*, and more divinely influential.*

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* "It is worth our observing, that when the apostle calls upon his brethren not to be carried about with strange doctrines, he offers this as a preservative: *It is a good thing that the heart be* ESTABLISHED *with* GRACE. Heb. xiii. 9. This will guard us from errors, and this will directly lead us to truth; for by the effectual influence of God's grace and good Spirit on our minds, we shall find in ourselves a *peculiar eviction*, which will prevail more than all demonstrations; will be more apodictical than all arguments and reasonings. I may call this a divine kind of logic, which thoroughly confutes and convinces us, which answers all our scruples and cavils, and wholly captivates our understandings; insomuch, that we are fully persuaded of the truth and reality of what is delivered to us.

"This, which I am now speaking of, is the very *depth of* CHRISTIAN THEOLOGY. You are brought, by what I here propound unto you, into the most INWARD RECESSES OF DIVINITY. If you come to the true understanding of this, you are arrived at the *greatest proficiency in the Christian religion.* It cannot be so well described as it can be experienced. The attainment of this excellency, and the discovery, go together. There is no better way to apprehend it than to possess it. Religion is better felt and relished by practice, than it can be comprehended in the way of speculation; as the sweetness of honey is better known by the taste, than by the description of it.

"The real and experienced Christian differs from the speculative one, as the *merchant* does from the *chemist*. The former hath no skill in furnaces, cannot *talk* of the nature of gold, or the ordering of it, according to art, yet he is rich, and hath gold enough. The latter hath rare notions of gold, and can discourse with great skill and quaintness about the managing of it; but yet the man is poor, and *wants what he talks of.* In like manner a true practical Christian may be rich in grace, though he cannot learnedly discourse of it; and a speculative Christian may be truly poor, though he can talk of the spiritual riches.—Aristotle wrote of the world, but his scholar conquered it."

Dr. JOHN EDWARDS.

Different methods of recommending Christianity, when they all tend to the same beneficial end, ought to be adopted and encouraged, because they are likelier to be *generally* successful. One and the same method might convince only one description of persons among the infinite variety of which the mass of mankind is composed. So long as Christian faith, Christian practice, and human happiness are more and more promoted, whosoever are the men, and whatever the books that promote them, let the benevolent man rejoice. Abstruce scholars, mathematicians, metaphysicians, and logicians, have often little relish for Christianity, till it is formed into a system, methodical, subtle, and erudite. Their religion must too often be such, and such only, as furnishes matter for ingenious disquisition. They are apt, in the pride of scientific improvement, to despise the simplicity of the Gospel. A religion, however, merely INTELLECTUAL, if there be any which may be so denominated, is essentially different from, and inferior to, what I have in this book inculcated, under the name of *cordial religion*. The one qualifies for degrees in an university school; the other is calculated to influence the *conduct* of all men, in the walks of common life; in the court, in the city, in the camp, and in the market place. High, low, rich, and poor, learned and unlearned, meet together in the school of Christ, and are there equally favoured with grace, and instructed in the knowledge which leadeth to salvation. Ill would it fare with mankind, if they must be linguists and historians, before they can be duly informed of the nature of that religion, which was intended for the happiness of all; and on the neglect and ignorance of which, they are obnoxious to divine displeasure.

Systematical or intellectual religion may employ the pen of a ready writer, or the tongue of a voluable disputant in the academical or ecclesiastical chair; but cordial religion, effectually, though silently; certainly, though unostentatiously; sweetens, softens, and spiritualizes, the human disposition. It may not gratify the pride or serve the worldly interest of individuals, but it elevates and refines the general nature of MAN.

How is this religion to be learned?* Not from systems, not from critics or metaphysicians, not from heathen historians and moralists, but by the TEACHING of GOD, or the divine energy of gospel grace. Such is the principal of what I have ventured to term Christian Philosophy,† in contradistinction to the philosophy of heathenism, and modern infidelity. It is CLEAR amidst some *obscurity*,* from the whole tenor of the gospel and epistles, that since our Lord's ascension, the beneficial purposes of Christianity are accomplished by the continual agency and never-failing superintendance of the Holy Spirit. I would by no means proceed so far as a writer some hundred years ago, who, observing the great and constant power attributed, by the written gospel, to the Holy Ghost, published a book, which he entitled, EVANGELIUM SPIRITUS SANCTI, or, *the Gospel of the Holy Ghost;* but at the same time, it appears to me evident, from the declarations of Jesus Christ, that the gospel is chiefly *efficacious*, as it has been ever since the ascension, by the operation of the Holy Ghost; the wakeful, tutelary guardian of every human creature.

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* Not by the letter, but by the Spirit, was MARY MAGDALEN learned. And how are your family, your mother and sister, your servants, your poor neighbour made Christians—by Dr. *Clarke?* by academical professors? or by the gospel accompanied with *immediate* grace?

" But whom say ye that I am? Simon Peter answered and " said, Thou art Christ, the Son of the living God. And Jesus " answered and said unto him, Blessed art thou, Simon Bar " Jona; MY FATHER WHICH IS IN HEAVEN HATH REVEALED IT UNTO THEE." MATT. xvi. 15, &c.

Our Saviour does not say that Peter had done well to form that conclusion, from *reasoning* on what he saw and heard; or deriving the conviction from any human means; but he says " FLESH " AND BLOOD hath not revealed it unto thee, but my father " which is in Heaven."

† That *experience* is the best guide to Christian knowledge is Dr. South's opinion:

" The truths of Christ crucified are the CHRISTIAN'S PHILOSOPHY; and a good life is the Christian's *logic*; that great " instrumental, introductive art, that must guide the mind into " the former; and where a long course of piety, and *close com-* " *munion with God,* has purged the heart, and rectified the will, " and made all things ready for the reception of God's Spirit, " *knowledge* will break in upon such a soul, like the sun shining " in his full might, with such a victorious ray, that nothing shall " be able to resist it.

" It is *experience* that must give knowledge in the Christian " profession, as well as all others; and the knowledge drawn " from experience is quite of another kind from that which flows " from speculation and discourse. It is not the *opinion*, but the " *path* of the just, that, the wisest of men tells us, shines more " and more *unto a perfect day*. The obedient, and the men of " *practice*, are those *sons of light*, that still outgrow all their " doubts and ignorances; that still *ride upon these clouds*, and " triumph over their present imperfection; till persuasion pass " into knowledge, and knowledge advance into assurance; and " all come, at length, to be completed in the *beatific vision*, and " a full fruition of those joys, which God has in reserve for them " whom, by his grace, he shall prepare for glory." Dr. *South*.

Dr. South, a man of wit and most vigorous intellect, was particularly active in decrying the doctrine of immediate grace, because the COURT discountenanced those who maintained it: and therefore what he has here said must be allowed to be extorted from him, by the *force of truth* opposing royal influence and *political* religion, which *varies* as the wind blows.

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* " The obscurity and *difficulty* of the scriptures serves," says Bishop Wilson, " to subdue the pride of man; to convince us, " that to understand them, we have need of a *light superior* to " reason, and that we must apply to God for help."

He may be *resisted;* his holy fire may be *quenched;* his *temple* may be polluted; and he may, in consequence, depart in displeasure. Happy would it be, if appearances did not justify the apprehension, that he is actually resisted, his holy fire quenched, his temple polluted, and both his displeasure and departure little regarded. It is the scope of *Christian Philosophy* to prevent this dreadful calamity.

To enquire HOW[*] the Spirit operates, is fruitless, if not presumptuous. It is enough for man to know, that it *does* operate; that, unless the words of scripture are violently tortured out of their meaning, out of that plain sense which every reader of competent judgment and of integrity, unwarped by prejudice, must allow them to bear, the Spirit of God is at this moment effecting, in the bosoms of all who are duly prepared for its energy, the grand purpose of our Saviour's incarnation. Great indeed is the mystery: but equally mysterious are the processes of nature.[†] All around us is mystery. Our very existence, our nutrition, the motion of a muscle in our bodies, is a wonderful arcanum, too difficult to be accounted for by reason. Yet, I believe, I know, that *I live, and move, and have my being*, though I cannot explain the union of soul and body, the mode of alimentary supply, or the cause of muscular motion. So also the spiritual life and motion are inexplicable. But this is certain: he who believes the scriptures, must believe its reality. And he who is once truly and *experimentally*[‡] convinced of the Spirit's operation, will want no other EVIDENCE; and he who tastes the fruits of the Spirit, will desire no other display of the EXCELLENCE of Christianity. Thus will the purpose of my book be accomplished. The EVIDENCE and EXCELLENCE of Christianity will be FELT* and acknowledged by every man, who becomes a convert to the doctrine of grace. He will acquire a SPIRITUAL UNDERSTANDING;† his rational faculty, as to spiritual matters, will be sublimed

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[*] " *Vocula* illa *quomodo*," Luther used to say, "*est detestabilis*"—That little word *How* is detestable.

[†] " Is the doctrine of grace more stupendous than the velocity of motion given to light?" Bp. WARBURTON.

[‡] " Η της ΠΕΙΡΑΣ ακριβεια κατισχυει την των λογων πιθανοτητα." DIOD. SIC. *Hist. lib.* 1.

PRAYER is the *means* of producing this *experience* in religion.

" If mankind are corrupted and depraved in their moral character, and so are unfit for that state which Christ is gone to " prepare for his disciples; and if the assistance of *God's Spirit* " be necessary to *renew their nature,* in the degree requisite to " their being qualified for that state, all which is implied in the " express, though figurative declaration, 'Except a man be *Born* " of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God:' supposing this, is it possible any *serious person* can think it a slight " matter, whether or no he makes *use of the means,* expressly " commanded by God, for obtaining this *Divine Assistance;* especially since the whole analogy of nature shews that we are not " to expect any benefits, without making use of the appointed " means of obtained or enjoying them? Now *Reason* shews us " nothing of the particular immediate means of obtaining spiritual " benefits. This, therefore, we must learn from *Revelation.*"— And Revelation says, *Ask and it shall be given.*

BUTLER'S Anal. Part 2. c. 1.

* " We not only believe it, but we FEEL it too; we feel the " comfortable influences, the sacred emanations of the Holy Spirit " upon us; more *particularly* at those offices of *Devotion,* wherein " HE descends upon *us* also, as he did once upon our blessed " Saviour, like a dove, and sheds his grace upon us, in some " measure, with those excellencies which become the sons of God.

" Or rather, he descends upon us, as he did once before, upon " the face of the waters, when he brought beauty and order upon " that which before was nothing but deformity and confusion."

Bp. HICKMAN.

† Col. i. 9. " We pray for you that ye may be filled with the " knowledge of his will, in all wisdom and *spiritual understanding.*"—Again, "Consider what I say, and the *Lord give thee* " *Understanding* in all things." 2 TIM. ii. 7.

and refined in in such a manner, as to supersede the the necessity of those voluminous, far-fetched, and elaborate proofs and defences of Christianity which have been enumerated, in a long catalogue, by *Fabricius;* and which, one after another, like abortive productions, have dropped into the gulph of oblivion, and left Christianity just where they found it. Indeed, as defences of this kind, have encreased, Christians appear to have decreased. The cavils introduced for refutation have lived, and the refutations died and been forgotten.

But doctrines which cannot be refuted by scripture, are sometimes exploded by the illiberal means of stigmatizing them with an offensive or unpopular NAME. This practice has always been highly detrimental to the diffusion of genuine Christianity. It causes opinions to be condemned in the gross. It induces the mind of the careless, contemptuously to reject the mass, without selecting the wheat from the chaff, and, indeed, without the trouble of examination. There is a vicissitude or fashion in religious doctrines, as well as in the modes of dress and external behaviour. Such a book, says the leader of the day, is Arminian, or calvinistical, or METHODISTICAL,* and it must be cried down by every

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* BISHOP HURD is as far removed from a *methodist* as possible. He is a divine, a philosopher, a scholar of the first rank; yet hear him (and let his words have weight) on the evidence of the Spirit of God on the heart of man.

"To the Spirit, *enlightening* our understandings, *purifying* our "wills, and *confirming* our faith, we must impute ALL that is "good in us, ALL that proficiency in TRUE holiness, which "qualifies us for the enjoyment of Heaven; and through this "discipline it is, that they who *sow to the Spirit,* are in the end, "*enabled of the Spirit to reap* LIFE EVERLASTING."

"All the revelations of God's will, even to our Lord himself as "the *man Christ Jesus,* and all the secret *illuminations* of the "faithful, in *all* times, are to be regarded as so many emanations "from the Spirit of God, the *Enlightener:* all the gradual impamphleteer or controversialist, who is aspiring at favour and preferment. But away with names, and the petty distinctions of religious party. Are you a Christian, or wish to be one, indeed, not in word only; for the sake of spiritual, not temporal purposes? Then drop your prejudices, and seek the SPIRIT OF CHRISTIANITY; not in systems, but in the written gospel, assisted by prayer, and the pious illustrations of sincere, good men, however they may have been reviled or neglected, through prejudice, political artifice, or mistaken zeal.

"provements of our virtue, all the graces which first descend "upon our hearts, and then manifested themselves in every good "word and work, are the production of the same Spirit, in his "office of *Sanctifier:* and lastly, all the firmness and resolution we "possess, under every trial in the world, all the foretaste we have "of future favour and acceptance, all our *joy* and *peace* in *believ*"*ing*, are the signs and proofs of the *Comforter* speaking to us, "and, according to our Saviour's *promise, abiding in us.*"

"If *a ray of light break in upon us;* if a new degree of *know*"*ledge* be imparted to us; if we see the *truth of the gospel* more "clearly, in any respect, than before we had done; *we cannot* "*mistake* in ascribing this additional *information* or *conviction,* to "the *illuminating Spirit within us.*"

"If we perceive our *devotions* to be quickened, our hopes en"livened, our *faith fortified,* we *shall not mistake* (having the ex"press promise of our Lord and Master) in ascribing these con"solations of peace and joy to the *Comforter;* we may regard them "as the *earnest and pledge of the Spirit in our hearts.* Eph. i. 14.

"I know," continues he, "that this will appear strange to "natural reason. But so the scripture has prepared us to expect "they would do. For the natural man (says the Apostle) receiv"eth not the things of the Spirit of God; for they are foolish"ness unto him. (1 Cor. ii. 14.) And to the same purpose, our "MASTER himself, speaking of the *spirit of truth;*—"whom "(says he) the WORLD cannot receive, because it seeth him not, "neither knoweth him; but ye (addressing himself to his dis"ciples, that is, to men who walk by faith, and not by sight,) "ye know him; for he dwelleth in you, and shall be in you."

Bp. HURD, Serm. 18. vol. ii.

When you have thus found the truth, shew its influence by your charity. Be united to all Christians, as well as to Christ; and beware of making distinctions, by nicknames, and thus exciting envy, wrath, malice, which are of a nature opposite to the fruits of the Spirit, love, joy, and peace. Good men should join in a firm phalanx, that the evil may not triumph on their divisions. Let all who are united under the banners of Christ, hail one another as brother Christians, though they may differ on the subject of church discipline, rites, ceremonies, or even non-essential doctrine.*

" If there be any *consolation* in Christ, if any comfort
" in love, if any *fellowship of the Spirit*, if any bowels
" and mercies, fulfil ye my joy, that ye be like-minded,

" * Setting aside many circumstances, in which men may *safely* " err, there are but few truths of scripture of an essential nature; " or, to speak more properly, there is but ONE, concerning which " all believers (I mean those who deserve the name) are firmly " agreed. This truth is the testimony of the word of God con- " cerning Jesus Christ, that he came into the world to save sin- " ners fully, freely, and eternally. So little room then, in reality, " does the scripture give for the diversity of opinions, that it calls " for perfect unity of sentiment; the diversity itself being owing " to the corruption and blindness of human nature in the worst, " as well as the remains of that corruption and blindness in the " best. The evidence of this truth, whence arises so full an " agreement among believers, and such complete satisfaction in " their own minds, is far greater than what can arise from any " argumentation, in which mankind are apt to deceive both them- " selves and others. It is the evidence of *internal experience*. I " feel myself lost and miserable. I experience such an healthful " change in my whole moral system: so that, upon the whole, " Christianity is the true cure of scepticism; and to the seriously " disposed, who submit to the *teaching of the Spirit*, it *gives the* " *highest internal evidence of its own truth*. A man finds himself " naturally averse to all good, ignorant of God, and without " either love or gratitude towards him, *selfish* and *hard-hearted* " with respect to his fellow-creatures. By putting his trust in " Christ, he has attained peace of conscience, love, and new

" having the same love, being of one accord, and of one
" mind."*

Let us consider how the hard-hearted, unconverted, depraved, and worthless part of mankind exult, while Christians, agreeing in essentials, quarrel and revile each other, not on the substance of religion, but on the mere shades of difference in opinion in matters of indifference. Let not the Philistians triumph. Let the olive-bearing army of peace-makers be combined under the banners of benevolence. *Theirs* is an unbloody† crusade; *theirs* is the contest of love. The victories in *their* warfare are over sin, misery, and death; and their crown, immortality. Let them march on to the soft harmony of Hosannas and Hallelujahs, uninterrupted by

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" views of the glory of God. He has experienced a real change
" in his affections and tempers. Surely he must be allowed to be
" a competent judge of what he has felt; he may preach too, by
" his life, the truth and the power of the gospel to others; and as
" he will find his *evidences* increase more and more, he may be
" more and more happy, from the consciousness of God within
" him now, (Col. i. 27. 2 Cor. xiii. 5.) and the prospect of bliss
" hereafter.

" If it be asked, where are such persons to be found? It is
" confessed their number is but rare. We may thank for this,
" the *contempt of the operations of the Holy Ghost*, which prevails
" in our days. A serious desire of knowing the real truth, and a
" spirit of submission to this divine teaching, are things which
" the truth requires of all who seek it: if you refuse this, you
" unreasonably refuse to Christianity her own mode and order of
" things; you strip her of her arms, and then complain of her
" feebleness and impotency. But if you submit to be the scholar
" of Jesus indeed, you will find, by experience, whether he will
" not give you to know the truth, and whether the truth will not
" make you free." MILNER.

* Phil. ii. 1, 2.

† " The pope would have done well to have thrown away his
" *keys* (as they say one of them once did,) before he took the *sword*
" into his hands."

the discordant din of angry contention. Are you a sincere believer? a lover of God and man? I salute you from my heart as my brother in Christ, whether, in consequence of your birth and education, you formed the creed you utter, at Rome, at Geneva, or in your closet at home. The Holy Ghost is the centre of our union; and all who are joined to him, must be associated in love.

Under the illustrious champions of Christianity, who flourished, in England, during the last century, great were the triumphs of grace over human obduracy. *The word of God* WAS *mighty, and cast down imaginations**. The sword of the Spirit, a *figurative* sword, the only one approved by Christianity, wielded by men who, like these, fought the good fight of faith, has been irresistable. But many since their time, have left it rust in its scabbard, and used, as a substitute for it, the wooden batoon of heathen ethics and modern philosophy, in a kind of mock fight, beating the air, to the amusement of the indifferent or unbelieving spectator. The men of the world, who laugh at religion, and the pretended philosophers, who reason against it, observing that the sword of the Spirit was no longer used, come forth with the renewed and increased audacity of those who love to display their prowess, when there is but a feeble opposition. They sang the song of victory, and ventured to suggest that Christianity, conscious of the badness of her cause, had surrendered in fact, tho' she still kept up the *appearance of defence*, for the sake of decency, LUCRE, and *political* deception. Infidelity plumed herself on her fancied conquest, and has long been endeaving to sway her sceptre over the most polished countries of Christendom. In France, at last, she flatters herself she has gained a complete victory, and silenced her opponent for ever.

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* 2 Cor. ix. v. διαλογισμους, which we render *imaginations*, certainly signifies REASONINGS.

Let us mark and deplore the consequence to morals and society. Extreme selfishness, pride, vanity, envy, malice, hardness of heart, fraud, cunning, and the false varnish of external decorum, hiding internal deformity, have remarkably prevailed in recent times, in the most polished regions, rendering man, as an individual, wretched and contemptible, and society comfortless and insecure. The human race has degenerated, in proportion as faith has diminished. The true spirit of Christianity, which can alone dignify human nature, and soften and liberalize the obdurate, contracted, selfish bosom of the mere natural *animal*[*], man, has not been sufficiently diffused, since it has been fashionable to extol natural religion, by depreciating grace; and the result has been, a deplorable profligacy both in principle and practice.

How devoutly then is it to be wished, that this true spirit may revive; that the divine influence of the GENUINE GOSPEL[†] may again prevail, and melt the heart of steel, and bow the stubborn knees of the men of the world, and the wise men whom the world admires? Behold them pursuing their own petty, selfish, sordid purposes, regardless of all others, but as they serve their own interest or pleasure; neither loving God nor man, and depraved to a nature almost diabolical, by habits of fashionable voluptuousness, selfishness, and CRUELTY, authorized by the most illustrious examples in HIGH-life. Behold this diabolical character transforming itself to an angel of light, by studied embellishments and polished manners, in which truth, honour, and benevolence are assumed as a cloak to cover the basest treachery, the vilest arts of dissimulation. Behold this character recommended, with all the charms of language, by one of the first NOBLEMEN, wits, and writers of the times, as the mark of the most solid wisdom; behold it, in consequence of recommendation so powerful, spreading among the youth of the nation, and diffusing a polished, splendid misery, like the shining appearance which is seen on masses of corruption and putrescence. "Ye are the salt of the earth," says our Saviour; evidently meaning the salt that is to preserve the world from a corrupt state, by becoming the means of grace to those who hear you preach and teach the true doctrine. How is he then the friend of man, or of his country, who obstructs the prevalence of such doctrine? Yet men, apparently good and learned, have united with the unprincipled, in placing every obstacle in the way of its diffusion among the people.

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[*] *Ψυχικος.*

[†] I hope the present time is not that of which the Apostle speaks:

“ The time will come, when they will not endure sound doc-
“ trine.” 2 TIM. iv. 3.

Men who preach against divine grace, may be said to be those whom Christ addresses in these words:

“ Ye shut up the kingdom of Heaven against men; for ye
“ neither go in yourselves, neither suffer ye them that are enter-
“ ing to go in.” MATT. xxiii. 13.

But while God's eternal truth is its foundation, and God's Holy Spirit its *guard*, neither violence nor treachery can subvert the kingdom of Heaven.

The grace of God is favourable to the tranquillity and security of the state; to the community, as well as to individuals, by teaching virtue of the most beneficial kind under the strongest sanction. "The grace of "God," says the apostle, "teaches us to deny all un-"godliness and worldly lusts, and to live soberly, *righte-"ously*, and godly in the WORLD." Yet against the prevalence of this grace of God, many pens and tongues have been employed during the last fourscore years; the pens and tongues, not of profligate infidels only, but of divines, teaching, for Christianity, a moral system of philosophy, well known* long before the nativity of Christ; and thus rendering, as far as their efforts could

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* Yet the heathens themselves, mere moralists as they are often considered, had an idea of the *divine energy*. Remarkable are the words of Maximus Tyrius.

"Do you wonder that God was present with Socrates, friendly, "and prophetic of futurity—AN INMATE OF HIS MIND?—A "man, he was, pure in his body, good in his soul, exact in the "conduct of his life, masterly in thinking, eloquent in speaking, "pious towards God, and holy towards men."

The doctrine of divine assistance, or of the immediate operation of the heavenly Spirit on the mind of man, is so far from unreasonable, that it was maintained by some of the greatest masters of reason, before the appearance of Christianity. The heathens did not affirm that the knowledge they possessed of theology was derived to them from reason; for Plato expressly says it is Θεων εις Ανθρωποις δοσις, the gift of the Gods to men,—the effect of divine communication. They deemed it *supernatural*, that reason should discover the will of God; a gift above nature, (δωρεαν υπερ φυσιν νικωσαν την φυση,) and overcoming nature in its present state of imbecility. The dead may as easily arise and walk, as the mind of man, fallen, as it is, into a state of spiritual death, raise itself to God and a divine life. Nothing can enable man to do those things which are above his *natural powers*, but *supernatural* aid, and that must come from the influence of the Deity.

It is, however, worth while to mark the DISCORDANT and *inconsistent* opinions of celebrated heathens on the subject of divine assistance.

"*Bonus vir sine Deo nemo est.*" SENECA, Epist. 41.

"*Deus in humano corpore hospitans.*" Epist. 31.

Yet this same philosopher says, in another place, "*Est aliquid* "*quo sapiens antecedat Deum. Ille naturæ beneficio, non suo, sapi-* "*ens est.* In one respect a philosopher excels God. God is "obliged to *nature* for his wisdom, and cannot help being so. "The philosopher thanks himself only." Epist. 53.

"*Atque hoc quidem omnes mortales sic habent,* externas commo- "ditates, *vineta, segetes, oliveta, ubertatem frugum et fructuum,* "*omnem denique commoditatem, prosperitatemque vitæ, a Diis se* "*habere; virtutem autem nemo unquam acceptam Deo retulit. Ni-* "*mirum recte. Propter virtutem enim jure laudamur, et in virtute*

prevail, his gospel a superfluous, and even ugly excrescence upon it. There is a kind of wisdom, we are told on the best authority, "which descendeth not from "above, but is EARTHLY, SENSUAL, DEVILISH*." No wonder that men, who are taught, by their instructors, to pursue this wisdom, and, in effect, to reject the gospel at the very moment they are solemnly professing it, should become (like the wisdom which they cultivate, and which the Apostle so strongly reprobates) earthly, sensual, DEVILISH. Much of the profligacy of manners in the present century is to be attributed to the desertion of the religion of our forefathers, and the teaching of a Christianity which has not the SAVOUR OF LIFE, and was unknown in England at the reformation.

"Earthly, sensual, *devilish*," are the epithets which the Apostle uses: now let us turn from the written book to the living world. Can any impartial observer deny,

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"*recte gloriamur. Quod non contingeret, si id* donum a Deo, *non* "*a nobis haberemus. At vero aut honoribus aucti, aut re familiari,* "*aut si aliud quippiam nacti sumus fortuiti boni, depulimus mali,* "*cum Diis gratias agimus, tum nihil nostræ laudi assumptum arbi*"*tramur. Num quis, quod bonus vir esset, gratias Diis egit unquam?* "*at quod dives, quod honoratus, quod incolumis. Ad rem autem ut* "*redeam, judicium hoc omnium mortalium est, fortunam a Deo* "*petendam, a seipso sumendam esse sapientiam.*"

CICERO, *de Nat. Deor. lib.* 3. *c.* 36.

"*Multos et nostra civitas et Græcia tulit singulares viros quorum* "*neminem,* NISI JUVANTE DEO, *talem fuisse credendum est.*"

CIC. de Nat. Deor. *lib.* 2.

"*Nemo igitur vir magnus sine aliquo afflatu divino usquam fuit.*"

CIC.

"*Hic est quisquam gentis ullius qui ducem naturam nactus ad vir*"*tutem pervenire potest.*"

CIC. Leg.

Both Cicero's and Seneca's sentiments on this subject are contradictory.

"Δεονται ξυναγωνιϛου θεου ϗ ξυλληπτορος."

MAX. Tyr. *Diss.* 22.

[*] James, iii. 15.

without affected candour, that there are many, whose conduct deserves these epithets? and can he deny, that they are chiefly among persons who seem to live without God in the world, and to be unbelievers in Revelation, though perhaps conformists to the church? Such persons seem to delight in evil; and, like the being from whom the last of these *epithets* is taken, to go about, seeking whom they may devour*. No man can be much conversant in any business in the world, especially where there is competition, without meeting with men who hesitate at no falsehood or baseness, and with whom it is never safe to have either conversation or transaction. Plausibly pretending to courteousness, to friendship to every thing just, right, and amiable, they lie in wait to deceive and to injure. They will do wanton mischief, for its own sake. They will not only demolish the fair fabric of another's happiness, but laugh over the ruins which they have made.

How beneficial would it be for such persons, and for society, if their hearts were renewed by regenerating grace; if they could be persuaded to believe that there really is something more desirable than MAMMON; something that contributes more to happiness, and the pleasurable enjoyment of life, than shew, equipage, *living in the eyes of others*, and the indulgence of an unfeeling, *self-idolizing* vanity, at the expence of truth, justice, mercy, and every thing that gives solid satisfaction and real dignity. The grace of God would even

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* Read, in the following description from scripture, how men ONCE degenerated, when estranged from God.

" So that there reigned in all men, without exception, blood,
" manslaughter, theft, and dissimulation; corruption, unfaithful-
" ness, tumults, perjury, disquieting of good men, forgetfulness
" of good turns, defiling of souls, changing of kind, disorder in
" marriage, adultery, and shameless uncleanness."

WISDOM, c. xiv. 23.—29.

ADORN them, make them more estimable and honourable, than the longest series of unmeaning titles, the most brilliant gems in a coronet, the most magnificent houses and parks, and most gaily-painted vehicles. It would do more; it would liberalize and soften their hearts, and make them MEN, such as the Creator intended them to be, feelingly alive to the charms of goodness, and to the touch of sympathy. The film would be removed from their eyes; and while they consulted the peace and happiness of others, they would see the things *that belong unto their own.* The horizon of their mental vision, now all sombrous and cloudy, would be beautifully serene. The stream of their lives, now a desolating torrent, abruptly dashing and foaming over its banks, would flow in its proper channel, smooth and clear, blest and blessing in its course.

Surely every thinking and good-natured mortal, who observes what a despicable and detestable, or rather pitiable object, a man may becomes, however elevated his rank and affluent his fortune, when his heart is hardened, and he feels no sentiment of love to God, or kindness to his fellow-creatures, must wish to promote, and gladly co-operate with others in promoting, the prevalence of the true Spirit of Christianity*. This alone, operating by grace, can restore the depraved, fallen, wretched creature, become by his perverseness,

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* The true Spirit of Christianity can alone preserve the CHURCH and *sincere* religion in society.

" I must profess, that I believe the DEGENERACY from the
" truth and power of the Christian religion, the ignorance of the
" principal doctrines of the Gospel, and that scorn which is cast
" in these, and the like expressions, on the grace of our Lord
" Jesus Christ, by such as not only profess themselves to be min-
" isters, but of a higher degree than ordinary, will be sadly omi-
" nous to the whole state of the reformed church amongst us, if
" not timely repressed and corrected. Dr. OWEN.

The scriptures themselves attribute the corruption of religion, and even the total loss of DIVINE KNOWLEDGE, to the *reasonings* of men upon it: when they regard the *outward*, and neglect or despise the inward testimony.

There is no truth more clearly asserted in scripture, than that the things of God are not known but by the SPIRIT OF GOD.

"The natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God; for they are foolishness unto him; neither can he know them, because they are SPIRITUALLY discerned."

1 COR. ii. 14.

"*He that lacketh these things*," (the *graces* mentioned in a preceding verse, particularly the *partaking of the divine nature*,) "*is* BLIND, *and cannot see afar off*." 2 PET. i. 9.

Men wanting these graces, and this participation of the divine nature, we are expressly told, *grew vain in their imaginations;* professing themselves *wise*, they became *fools;* worshipping the *creature* (and among the created things is to be numbered the faculty of reasoning) *more than the Creator*. They spoiled the religion of Christ, through philosophy and vain deceit, after the *traditions of men*, and turned *the truth of God into a lie*. This was in consequence of following the *rudiments* of the *world*, *κατα τα ϛοιχεια*, according to the elements and principles of natural reason and philosophy. Wherefore the Apostle would have them dead to the *rudiments* of the world, for they are only the *commandments and doctrines of* MEN, vainly puffed up by their FLESHLY *mind*, and *science falsely so called*; consisting of foolish and unlearned *questions*, which served only to GENDER STRIFE. (2 Tim. ii. 23.)

The Apostle gives Timothy a description of human learning unaccompanied with divine grace; and says that "it is proud, knowing nothing, but doting about questions and strifes of words, whereof cometh envy, strife, railings, evil surmisings, perverse disputings of men of *corrupt minds*, and destitute of the truth." (1 Tim. vi. 4. 2 Tim. ii. 14.) He therefore bids him put them in remembrance, charging them, before the Lord, not to strive with words to no profit, but to the perverting of the hearer; for they will *increase into more ungodliness*, (they will cause infidels to grow more obstinate and disputatious in defence of their unbelief,) *and their words will eat as cankers;* (they will, by submitting the claims of Christianity to human reason only, eat up and destroy its very essence, which is divine.) Therefore *earthly*, *sensual*, *devilish*, to his proper rank, as a rational, immortal being, and to the unspeakable happiness, for which he was intended by divine benevolence.

Mine is an humble attempt to promote the prevalence of the true Spirit of Christianity. In recommending the doctrine which this book particularly enforces, I know that I am justified by the holy scriptures*, by the church, by the tenets of the most learned and virtuous of the dissenters, and the greatest divines of this country, who have displayed their abilities, either by the press or the pulpit. I claim no merit, but that of endeavouring to rescue the true and most momentous doctrine of the Gospel from the neglect and contempt in which it has been involved, during this century, by false policy and *partiality*, expressing their rancorous hatred to sects, deemed, at various times, injurious to certain worldly interests, and temporary purposes of state. Christianity itself has been wounded by weapons, aimed only at men, whose political sentiments might perhaps be wrong, though their religious were, for the most part, strictly

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he again dissuades, "*foolish and unlearned questions*, knowing that "they do gender strifes;" that instead of settling disputes, and confirming men in the faith, they provoke controversy, multiply doubts, and are ultimately a fruitful cause of infidelity. "If you "are determined to rely on reasoning," said the Tindals, Collins's, Morgans, Chubbs, and Paines, "we will accept your challenge, "and fight you with the weapons of your own choice." They fought; and in the opinions of many *deluded* persons, were often victorious in the field of syllogism.

It is a sad instance of imprudence in the leaders of our Christian warfare, when they give up the sword of the Spirit, and rely entirely on the Φρονημα σαρκος for protection and defence. The doctrine of grace furnishes a panoply.

* "He who doubts it, quarrels not with our creed, but our "grammar; and instead of going to church to be instructed bet-"ter, he ought to be sent to school." Bp. HICKMAN.

conformable to scripture*, and beneficial to every community.

I confess myself, in this attempt, to be only the pupil of those GREAT MASTERS whose opinions I have copiously cited, that they may be both an ornament and defence to my imperfect manual of CHRISTIAN PHILOSOPHY. Some of the greatest *deceased* divines of the church of England, next to the scriptures, are my chief authority. Happy am I to sit at the feet of such instructors; men, whose learning and abilities were of the very first magnitude, and whose piety and goodness of heart seem to have vied, for excellence, with their vigorous understandings, and accurate knowledge of scriptural theology. It is honour enough to be merely instrumental in republishing their salutary doctrines, and giving them the inconsiderable sanction of my public, though single vote. If they were now alive, they would be most anxiously diligent, in the present state of Christianity, in exciting the true spirit of vital and experimental religion. Never was there more occasion for their zeal and activity than now; and it appears to me, that their mode of recommending Christianity was a right mode, because, among other reasons, it has the test of experience in its favour.

The fact is incontrovertible, that in their times it was greatly successful. The true spirit of Christianity, during their ministry of the Gospel, mightily grew and prevailed. Infidelity was uncommon and infamous; and the mild, meek, placid temper of the Gospel was deemed, even in the highest ranks of society, not only conducive to happiness, but ornamental. Religious grace was valued above all *graceful* accomplishments. Men gloried in maintaining, openly and consistently, the Christian character; and the force of truth, not weakened by false politics, made it even a fashion.

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* Many who dislike the discipline and communion of our church, firmly adhere to the *articles of it.*

I have laboured to revive the principles of those times; not without a hope, that they may have similar success in our day, if duly encouraged by high example. Men are doubtless, NOW as well as ever, susceptible of religious impressions, if properly enforced on EVANGELICAL authority. The times, it is said, are altered; but let it be remembered, that men make the times, and that men are very much modelled by books and all public instruction.

It is certainly unwise, in the present adverse circumstances of Christendom, to neglect or discountenance any mode of effectually disseminating and confirming the Christian faith, more especially any mode which has in past times been found successful, and is authorized by scripture.

For myself, I must beg leave to say, what is indeed sufficiently evident, that I have been in search of truth, not of favour or advantage. I have deemed religion lovely enough to be wedded without a dowry. I have had no sinister view, but have employed my hours of leisure in a way which I thought might be most beneficial to my fellow-creatures and my country. If I am wrong in my doctrine; if my GREAT MASTERS have instructed me erroneously, I am open to conviction, and shall rejoice to be better informed. I will say with the poet, addressing the *Father of Lights*,

> " If I am right, thy GRACE impart,
> " Still in the right to stay;
> " If I am wrong, O teach my HEART
> " To find that better way."

In the mean time, I make this offering to my fellow-mortals, labouring, like myself, in pursuit of happiness, though, many of them, in a different mode; and I dedicate it, with sincere devotion, to TRUTH, PIETY, AND PEACE.

APPENDIX.

No. I.

Cursory Remarks on one or two Objections in Mr. Paine's *last Pamphlet, against the authenticity of the Gospel.*

It is much against my opinion of propriety to recommend to public notice, the writings of infidels, by animadverting upon them; it is still more so, to *quote* their cavils, though with an intent to refute them. What is this, indeed, but to contribute to the dissemination of their errors, while it gratifies their vanity? Mr. Gibbon avowed that FAME was his object; and it may be suspected, that the greater part of sceptical or infidel writers, are pleased with those answers and refutations, which, though they are meant to discountenance them, yet do, in fact, contribute, more than any thing else, to their publicity, notoriety, or, as they may conceive, to their GLORY.

But with respect to Mr. Paine, his notoriety is already so great, as scarcely to admit of increase; and there is too much reason to fear, that his infidel writings will attract general notice, at least among the lower classes, without any aid from controversial opposition. I think, therefore, I shall do no harm, if, unfortunately, I should do no good, by making one or two remarks on his recent attack on Christianity.

Mr. Paine is supposed, by his partisans, to have laid the axe to the root of revealed religion. His blows, indeed, are violent; but they miss their aim. His weapon is blunted and repelled, by striking against a solid substance. Many such strokes have, at various times, been levelled at Christianity; but the hardy tree, rooted deeply in the hearts of men, and watered by the dews of Heaven, has vegetated with fresh vigour, and, after the operation of lopping, diffused its branches with additional luxuriance.

In Mr. Paine's *theological* works there is, indeed, little NOVELTY. His objections have been frequently considered, and, for the most part, removed. They, are, however, NEW to the young and the unlearned, who seldom possess time, books, or inclination, sufficient to qualify them as judges of their solidity. Mr. Paine's political opinions contribute much to recommend, among many, his theological; and thus party zeal is unfortunately excited in favour of religious scepticism or actual infidelity. From a variety of causes, peculiar to the present times and circumstances, there is too much reason to apprehend, that Mr. Paine's theological pamphlet is too favourably received; and that it will contribute to diffuse licentiousness, both of principles and practice. It is not from real novelty, or the peculiar ability of the author, but from temporary circumstances, that it will derive its malignant efficacy. I am not presumptuous enough in my own powers, to suppose myself able to counteract it. But I have attempted it throughout this book; not doubting that some of those many learned and ingenious divines, who, by their high situation in the church, enjoy ample leisure, possess extensive libraries, and all other opportunities for information, will step forward to oppose an attack, which tends to undermine the whole fabric of the visible CHURCH, and which, if successful, must render their high offices not only superfluous, but ridiculous; their dignities not only badges of folly, but, which is worse, of knavish hypocrisy.

Mr. Paine is an additional instance to prove that men, deeply immersed in the affairs of the world, and considering its politics as matters of the first, if not the *only* importance, usually bring with them dispositions to the study of Christianity, which render them blind to its EVIDENCE and EXCELLENCE. They come with a pride and confidence in their own reason, a state of mind peculiarly offensive to the SOVEREIGN of Heaven, who resisteth the proud, and giveth grace to the humble.

The kingdom of Christ not being of this world, they view it as *aliens*, not only with indifference, but disaffection. Indeed, they seldom give themselves the trouble to study, as they ought, the nature of its transcendent polity.

It is an old observation, and confirmed by daily experience, that men are apt to condemn what they do not understand. Mr. Paine, indeed, is not deficient in understanding. He has given indubitable proofs of great sagacity; but his sagacity, applied to religion, is that of the NATURAL man, as the Apostle describes him. There is a SPIRITUAL UNDERSTANDING; an understanding irradiated by divine grace, necessary to comprehend the things of the Spirit, without which a man is scarcely better qualified to judge of the gospel, as it is GRACE AND TRUTH, than the blind to decide on the beauty of a picture. He may descant on words and syllables. He may view the letter of the scriptures as a critic, a logician, an historian; but there is a veil on his heart, which prevents him from perceiving that witness or testimony of the Spirit, which carries conviction, in defiance of all difficulties and obscurities in the letter. The Gospel is the *ministration of Spirit and life, and the* POWER OF GOD unto salvation. This POWER OF GOD is not to be limited in its action, to the ability of any man or set of men to suggest or answer objections to any particular portions of the scripture. It shines on, however men may cavil. Like the moon, it continues to illuminate the night, unaffected by the poor ignorant animals who bark at her benign radiance. There is internal evidence in Mr. Paine's pamphlet, that he is unhappily unacquainted with the ministration of the Spirit and the POWER OF GOD, as it is described in the Gospel, and experienced by true believers. He is out of his province, where he treats of theology, and resembles the philosopher of antiquity, who gave lectures to Hannibal, on the art of war.

But Mr. Paine is not only ignorant of Christianity; he is prejudiced against it. His politics appear to him incompatible with the power of the church; and to undermine the church, he levels his blow at the whole of Christianity. He pierces Christ, to stab the priesthood through his sides.

As the policy of monarchial countries has made the church an ally of the state, he endeavours to weaken the state, by demolishing its ally. Religion in France, corrupted by political artifice, and depraved by superstition, was favourable to slavery. He transfers his hatred from religion so abused, to all religion but deism. He considers revelation as a mere state contrivance; not aware that the church and kingdom of Christ subsist, independently of all external authority, in the hearts of all true believers, in every clime, united by the Holy Ghost, under their king and priest, JESUS CHRIST. The living temple of the human heart would still stand, if all the temples of stone, in the violent and wicked contentions of politicians, were demolished and swept away with the besom of destruction. The whole legions of France, supposing them united under the banners of Mr. Paine, (and I am far from thinking that the whole of that nation, or even a majority, would enlist in the cause of infidelity,) would be unable to destroy THIS TEMPLE *not made with hands*, not cemented with mortar, but with the Spirit of holiness and love. But Mr. Paine's PREJUDICE against local churches, (all which have been corrupted,) leads him, most unjustly and unphilosophically, to hate the truly CATHOLIC *invisible church*, which is far above the politics of this world, and too pure to admit the abuses introduced by despotism and knavery imposing upon folly.

Mr. Paine takes what has been called "a *short way*," with the Christians, or supporters of Christianity. He goes through and explodes the whole of the Old and New Testament, in the pages of a trivial pamphlet. My limits will not, at present, suffer me to enter on the objections which he makes to the *Old Testament*. Indeed I am ready to confess myself unable to defend or explain all those parts which are excepted against by Mr. Paine, and appear to be really difficult and obscure. But they have often been defended and explained by others, with great learning and sagacity.

I am more particularly concerned, as indeed are all Christians, with the *New Testament;* and not so much with the LETTER, as with the SPIRIT. Mr. Paine's cavils against the LETTER have been often made, and well refuted. I beg the reader who is not firmly settled in the faith by BETTER EVIDENCE, than any *human learning* can afford to study with attention, adequate to the important subject, Dr. TOWNSON and Dr. LARDNER on the Gospels, and Mr. WEST on the Resurrection*. He will conclude, from a perusal of their excellent books, that there is cause sufficient for every pious, humble man to give his full assent to all the essential parts of the Gospel history; to be rooted in faith, to rest in hope, and to abound in charity. Let him wish Mr. Paine a BETTER MIND, and then suffer his books to take their natural course, as many of the same kind have done, to the gulph of oblivion.

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* Dr. Trapp on the Gospels, is a very useful book for the unlearned.

I shall advert only to one or two principal objections made by Mr. Paine, leaving the rest to those who excel and delight in *critical* theology. From the specimen I give, I mean no more than that the young or unlearned reader should see that Mr. Paine is not yet entitled to the epithet bestowed on one of the schoolmen, that of IRREFRAGABILIS or the UNANSWERABLE.

I pass by the indecency and blasphemy of the introductory objections which he makes to the New Testament, with a contemptuous silence. All that is advanced on this occasion, has been well considered and answered, long before Mr. Paine was brought into existence.

I refer the reader to Dr. TOWNSON, for a satisfactory account of the difference in the *genealogies* of Christ, as given by St. Matthew and St. Luke; though I shall have occasion to mention them presently. In the mean time, I proceed to the GENERAL objection. The *general objection* to the credibility of the Gospel history is made by Mr. Paine in the following words:

" The presumption is," says he, " that the books " called the Evangelists, and ascribed to Matthew, " Mark, Luke, and John, were not written by Matthew, " Mark, Luke, and John, and that they are IMPOSITIONS. " The disordered state of the history, in these few books, " THE SILENCE OF ONE BOOK UPON MATTERS RELATED " IN ANOTHER, and the DISAGREEMENT that is to be " found among them, implies that they are the productions of some unconnected individuals, *many years* " *after the things* they pretend to relate; each of whom " made his own LEGEND; and not the writings of men, " *living intimately* together, as the men called the Apos" tles are supposed to have done; in fine, that they are " MANUFACTURED, as the books of the Old Testament

" have been, by other persons than those whose names " they bear."

This paragraph evinces Mr. Paine's ignorance of the dates of the Gospel's publication, the particular *occasions* on which they were written, and the peculiar scope or purpose of each writer. It is an *allowed* truth, that all the Evangelists wrote a considerable *time after* the ascension of our Saviour, at different periods, for different purposes, from different places, to different descriptions of men; all which the reader may see well explained in Dr. TOWNSON's discourses on the Gospel.

But for the sake of readers busily engaged in the world, who may not have read, or be inclined to read, Dr. Townson's, or other books on the subject, I will submit a few considerations, which I think, will remove this *general* objection, which arises chiefly from " THE " SILENCE OF ONE BOOK UPON MATTERS RELATED IN " THE OTHER."

The Times and Places of writing the four Gospels were as follow:

Gospels.	Place.	From our Lord's Ascension.
St. Matthew's,	Judea,	64 yrs.
St. Mark's,	Rome,	64
St. Luke's,	Greece,	64
St. John's,	Ephesus,	68

Or, according to Dr. Owen,

St. Matthew's,	Jerusalem, *for the use of the Jewish converts*,	38
St. Luke's	Corinth, *for the use of the Gentile converts*,	53
St. Mark's,	Rome, *for the use of Christians at large*,	63
St. John's,	Ephesus, *to confute the heresy of* CERINTHUS,	69

The *times* of writing are differently given by the learned Dr. Mill, in his Prolegomena to the New Testament: thus,

	From the Ascension.
St. Matthew wrote	61
St. Mark,	63
St. Luke,	64
St. John,	97

Each of the Evangelists had a *particular* view or intention in writing his Gospel history; at the same time that he calculated it for *general* information, in all ages of militant Christianity.

By the way, I must observe, that the distance of time from our Lord's ascension, to the writing of the Gospels, (erroneously stated by Dr. Watts, in the quotation from him in the preceding pages,) furnishes me with an argument in favour of my main doctrine. During sixty, seventy, or perhaps nearly a hundred years, Christianity flourished without the assistance of any written Gospel. This must have been by the *Spirit's immediate* influence. It does not appear, that when the *apostolical epistles* were written, any of the Gospels which we now have, were extant or known. They are not mentioned in the epistles, nor is there any allusion to them. Yet it is clear from the epistles, that there were large churches or societies of Christians—without a written Gospel—except that which was written on the heart of the humble believer by the Spirit's ministration.

To return to Mr. Paine's objection, concerning the "*silence of one Gospel on matters related in another.*"

This will not appear at all wonderful, when it is considered, that St. Matthew wrote to the *Jews only;* St. Mark, (under the *dictation* of St. Peter,) to ALL Christians; St. Luke to the GENTILE converts; St. John, to certain *heretics*, who denied the pre-existence and divinity of Christ; and that they wrote at very dis-tant places, and at very different times, under circumstances probably no less various. But, to be a little more particular. St. Matthew wrote at Jerusalem, to the *Jews only;* those, I mean, of the Jews, who were converted to Christianity. As *they* lived near the scene of action, and many of them had probably observed our Saviour, and heard his discourses, he *omitted* many things, as well *known to them*, and mentioned others with a *conciseness* which he would not have approved, had he been writing to *foreigners*, or persons totally unacquainted with the subjects of his history. The other Evangelists very properly *vary* from him in *explaining* what he felt less distinct, in *expatiating* where he observed a brevity, in *adding* what he omitted; as was reasonable, since they wrote considerably *after* him, and to persons who, it must be supposed, were unacquainted with the customs, the language, and even the country of Judea.

If it be asked, what becomes of the *inspiration* of the Gospels, if the writers thus conducted them according to the rules of *human prudence?* I answer, in the words of Dr. Townson, "The Holy Spirit sanctified their "hearts with a lively and *powerful sense of spiritual* "*things;* enlightened their minds with a just knowledge "of the truth; and endued them, with wisdom, (or "*prudence*,) to relate the life of Christ in a manner be- "coming the subject, and suitable to their SEVERAL "DESIGNS: and these gifts, which *exalted* the natural "powers of their minds, without DESTROYING them, "would produce *verity* and *propriety*, but *not* IDENTITY "of relation." They reported such words and deeds, as conduced to the purpose of converting or establishing the persons whom they *immediately* addressed; while the SPIRIT of God took care that the *whole of their history*, as contained in *four* narratives, should convey information sufficient, in all *necessary* points, not only for their *own* age, but for ALL ages of Christianity.

" They VARY," says the objector, " and therefore " they cannot be true and faithful narrators." But in what do they vary? Does one of them say that our Saviour rose from the dead, and the other, that he did not? Do they vary in any important point of DOCTRINE? No; but they vary in a few *historical* circumstances, which affect not the MAIN PURPOSE in the smallest degree. Their variations in non-essentials, and their agreement in essentials, is a mark of veracity. Their variations prove that they did not write in concert, or with a design to deceive; for if they had, they would have taken care to have avoided what would expose them immediately to the objections of their opponents; and their agreement in essentials, in the grand purpose of shewing that Man was to be favoured with the Holy Spirit, is a proof that Providence superintended them; and that they were so strongly convinced of this truth, and had it so present to their minds, that they could not possibly *omit* it, or *vary* in *it*, however *else* they might vary.

Theophylact says, very sensibly, *Δὶ αυτο τουτο μαλλον αληθευουσιν, οτι μη κατα παντα ωμοφωνησαν. ενομισθησαν, γαρ αν, οτι συγκαθισαντες αλληλοις και συμβουλευσαμενοι, εγραψαν. νυν δε ο παρελειψεν ουτος, εγραψεν εκεινος· και δια τουτο, δοκουσιν εν τισιν διαλλαττειν. " On this very account," says Theophylact, " they may be more easily believed to " have spoken the *truth*, because they do not every " where speak alike; for if they had, they would have " been supposed to have written in collusion; but, as " the case is now, what one is *silent upon*, another has " written; and, *therefore*, they appear in some things to " differ;"—but they differ εν τοις ελαχιστοις, *in very*

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* Theophylact *Proœm. in Matt. Evangelium.*

minute things—as he had just before observed. Still keeping in mind, that Mr. Paine's chief objection is "THE SILENCE OF ONE BOOK (of the Gospel) UPON "MATTERS RELATED IN THE OTHER," let us now proceed to St. Mark.

St. Mark's Gospel was dictated by St. Peter, who was acquainted with St. Matthew's. It was in many things *anticipated* by St. Matthew. It was published in Italy, perhaps at Rome, and addressed to Christians in general; but particularly to the new converts, both pagan and Jewish. Some of them might have already seen St. Matthew's Gospel, and all of them might hereafter see it; and therefore St. Mark is *silent* on many precepts and parables, as being already known from the narrative of his predecessor. In some matters, St. Mark *explains* and *describes more fully* than St. Matthew, because he addressed himself in part to the *Gentiles*, who could not know so well as the Jews, to whom alone St. Matthew wrote, what related to the Jewish language, customs, scriptures, or topography. When he *repeats*, which is very often, for very good reasons, what St. Matthew has told, he *adds* some circumstance of *explanation*, necessary to the Gentiles, that is, to foreigners, who were very little acquainted with either the country or the inhabitants of Jerusalem. It was necessary to repeat many facts related by St. Matthew, because in that age, the art of printing being unknown and copies of the Gospels very difficult to be procured, especially by the poor, it must, in the nature of things, have happened frequently, that the persons for whom St. Mark wrote, Jews at a great distance from Judea, and pagans, (both *newly converted,)* had never had a sight of St. Matthew's Gospel. Very difficult must it have been, in those days to have sent many copies from Jerusalem to Rome, even if many existed, and if the converts *near* Jerusalem had not demanded ALL that could be multiplied by the slow process of the hand-writing. St. Mark's narrative is therefore nearly the same as St. Matthew's, with the *addition* of such matters as might be nessary to the persons immediately addressed, and the *omission* of other matters which were either not essential, or, if they were, might be learned from St. Matthew's Gospel, already published.

St. Mark, it has been already said, is supposed to have written under the entire direction, or rather the dictation, of St. Peter; and it is observable, that St. Peter is represented as *present* at all the actions and sayings of our Lord recorded in this Gospel. And this circumstance will account for St. Mark's "*silence* on some " matters related by the other Evangelists." The narrative of St. Mark seems to be RESTRICTED, in great measure, to such transactions as St. Peter was *present* at; which, while it adds to the authenticity of the narrative, accounts for the *omission* of deeds or words, at which St. Peter was *not* present, and thus obviates Mr. Paine's objection.

St. Luke's Gospel was designed for the *Gentiles only*. Of this there is much internal evidence. He studiously avoids Hebrew words, and uses, wherever it can be done, Greek terms, to express the ideas of the Hebrew. And there is one most striking particular in St. Luke, which arose from his addressing the Gentiles only. The fine PARABLE OF THE PRODIGAL, to be found in none other of the Gospels, was admitted by St. Luke, because it conveyed a doctrine highly encouraging to the GENTILE, who was that younger son, returned at last, to his father, and received with affection. St. Matthew is *silent* upon this parable, because writing, as he did, to the JEWS, he knew, especially at that earlier period when he wrote, that it would not be agreeable to their narrow prejudices, and their ideas of *exclusive* salvation. St. Mark and St. John are *silent* upon it, because it was not necessary to their purposes.

St. Luke's genealogy of Christ differs much from St. Matthew's; and Mr. Paine triumphs greatly on the difference.* But let it be duly noticed, that St. Matthew, writing to the Jews only, was contented with tracing the genealogy of the Messiah, for their satisfaction, up to David and Abraham; while St. Luke, writing to the Gentiles, traced it up to ADAM, the father of all mankind, Gentile as well as Jew; thus encouraging the GENTILES, by making it appear that they, as descendants of Adam, were also related to the Messiah, as well as the Jews.

Another remarkable circumstance in St. Luke, evinces that the Evangelists adapted their narratives, as wisdom directed, to the particular descriptions of persons to whom they were immediately addressed. St. Luke mentions the name of the Roman emperors that reigned when Christ was born, and when himself began to preach. It was the practice of the Gentiles to mark the æra of events by the reigning emperor. St. Matthew, St. Mark, and St. John observe a *silence* concerning the reigning emperor. It did not appear to them necessary or expedient to use this mode of *dating* events, when writing to Jews, or persons acquainted with Judea and its history.

Let it be attended to, that there were in circulation, before some of the Gospels were written a great many *narratives* (διαγησεις) of our Saviour's life and death, by *unknown* authors, which being read in certain parts, might render it unnecessary to dwell on some particulars which they might have recorded with truth and accuracy. It has long been my opinion, (but I offer it with the diffidence of one who ventures a conjecture,) that the four Gospels which we now have, were written to supply the defects, correct the errors, and give confirmation to the truths, which appeared in these popular *narratives*, at which St. Luke seems to hint in the very entrance or introduction to his Gospel. St. Luke speaks not, when he says, that *MANY had taken in hand to set forth in* ORDER *a declaration of those things which are most surely believed by us*, he speaks not of ST. MATTHEW or ST. MARK by name. He gives them no preference. He could not mean by MANY, *two* only. He probably meant the ΔΙΑΓΗΣΕΙΣ* above-mentioned, which he seems to censure for inaccuracy. It would be highly credible, (if we had not *information)* that there were narratives handed about of merely *human* composition. Such events as had happened in Judea must have excited curiosity; and the pleasure of relating extraordinary events naturally prompted men to gratify it. Gospel histories, therefore, abounded. The Gospels of the *four* Evangelists were VARIED, according as the *necessity* which appeared to exist from the errors, the defects, or misrepresentations of the διαγησεις, or narratives, which were circulated among the persons to whom the four Evangelists wrote, seemed to require.

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* See Trapp on the Gospels.

But to proceed to St. John. He wrote a great many years after St. Matthew. The history of Christ, at near a hundred years after his ascension, was probably pretty well known by the Gospels, and the *common* narratives called *διαγησεις* and *παραδοσεις*. He wrote chiefly to correct mistakes in DOCTRINE; giving at the same time a *narrative* for the use of those who might still be uninformed in the history. He wrote against a heresy. He had to set men right as to the dignity of Christ. Therefore there are many things in this Gospel on which the others are SILENT; and he, on the other hand, is *silent* on many things, because *repetition* of what *they* had given the world would have been either of little use, or quite superfluous, to the persons whom he *immediately* addressed.

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* There were *many* διαγησεις (narratives) and παραδοσεις (traditions). But there were two very celebrated, and called Gospels; the one according to the Hebrews; the other, according to the Ægyptians. These were a collection of facts and sayings, collected from *oral tradition*. The first maintained its credit long after the publication of the four Evangelists, and was a favourite Gospel. It was read in the church during three hundred years. Some think, and I subscribe to their opinion, that this was the *original* HEBREW of St. Matthew. But arguments are not wanting to prove that it was another.—See this very curious subject discussed in MILLII *Proleg.*

By thus fairly considering the different times, places, persons, and other circumstances, in which the several Gospels were written, we shall not be at a loss to account rationally, and to the satisfaction of every GOOD MIND, for omissions, variations, and additions, in the evangelical histories; and the cavils of unbelievers will never it is to be hoped, prevail upon serious, humble Christians, who love truth, and seek it with simplicity of heart, unbiassed by *politics*, or worldly motives, to renounce the WRITTEN WORD, much less the SPIRIT of Christianity.

But though the written word were proved to contain many marks of human infirmity, lapses of memory, and terrors of judgment, yet the good Christian, having the WITNESS IN HIMSELF, would go on his way, rejoicing, hoping, and believing to the end. If no other event had been announced in the WRITTEN WORD, than that (agreeably to general and uniform TRADITION) the Holy Ghost was sent to reside among men, after our Lord's ascension, this alone would be GLAD TIDINGS, or an *evangelium* sufficient to make him exult in the name and privileges of a Christian. If the four Gospels are *uninspired*, yet the writers as good men and firm believers, were certainly under the *ordinary* influence of the Holy Spirit, and related the truth as exactly as their abilities qualified them for narration. They had most evidently, no intention to deceive. Impostors could never have written with such simplicity. So that though their histories should be found not quite exempt from human errors, as no other history ever was exempt, yet still the main point of revelation is clear. The gift of the Spirit is announced by them. It has in all ages of the church been EXPERIENCED; and tho' all the books in the world were destroyed, it would remain. The *tradition* is now too extensive to be ever lost. And what mortal, who, as the poet says, comes into the world "just to look about him and to die," will presume to say, that the ETERNAL GOD cannot make his will known to man, by constant and immediate revelation, without the aid of the penman or the printer? Disputants, indeed, contending for praise and preferment, will wrangle on this, and all other points; but while they wrangle, the humble Christian believes, and is happy.

There are two *particulars* of variation, which Mr. Paine lays great stress upon, and which, therefore, I shall take under cursory consideration.

1st. "Not any of these writers," says he, "agree in "reciting exactly the written inscription, short as it is, "which they tell us was put over Christ when he was "crucified. Matthew says it was, *This is Jesus, the* "*King of the Jews;* Mark, *The King of the Jews;* Luke, "*This is the King of the Jews;* John, *Jesus of Nazareth,* "*the King of the Jews.*"

This objection has no more claim to novelty than importance; and I only consider it, to shew the unlearned reader how easily it may be obviated. Let him conclude, as he may fairly do, that most of Mr. Paine's objections, however plausible, may, upon impartial examination, be removed.

The words on the cross were in THREE languages; Hebrew, Greek, and Latin. St. Matthew, writing to the Hebrews, probably selected that which was in their own language, in which the word JESUS signifies a Saviour. As this was intended to be read by the Jews, it might be designed, by Pilate's advisers, to heighten the insult and mockery, by calling Christ a Saviour, as well as a king: in Hebrew, it certainly admitted of that interpretation, while it also stood for a proper name.

St. Mark, writing at Rome, probably selected the LATIN words.—Latin was *Pontius Pilate's* own language; and he, probably, as it is well known was the case with the Romans, prided himself in not using any other language than his own; so he omits, in this inscription, which being Latin, may be supposed to be of *his* own dictation, the Hebrew words *Jesus* and *Nazareth*, and inserts, consistently with the usual brevity of Latin inscriptions, *Rex Judæorum*—the King of the Jews.—Indeed the words, *This is*, were in course understood, and might be supplied by the Evangelists; but they were inserted by St. Matthew, and were *common* to *all* the inscriptions. St. Luke, like St. Mark, took *his* from the Latin *Rex Judæorum*.

St. John's is probably from the *Greek* inscription, and he says, "Jesus of Nazareth, the King of the Jews," which, there is no doubt, was an exact translation of the Greek words. He says, addressing *foreigners*, as the inscription itself also did, "Jesus of *Nazareth*." The word Jesus would not convey the idea of a Saviour to the Greeks; it was to them only a proper name, therefore he adds the *Nazarene*, or "of Nazareth," as a matter of historical information. The Jews knew the native place of Jesus but the Greeks did not, as Nazareth was an inconsiderable town. This addition might be intended as a mark of contempt, and to shew the Greeks or foreigners in general, that the Jews disdained a king who originated from so paltry a place as Nazareth. Nathaniel's question in St. John is, "Can any "good thing come out of Nazareth?" Thus it appears, that the inscription being in *three different languages*, might, for very good reasons, in the opinion of those who placed it over the cross, have some *variations* adapted to the various readers, and consistent with the views of the various writers.

Mr. Paine adds, that "Mark says Christ was cruci-"fied at the third hour—nine in the morning; and John "says, it was the sixth hour—twelve at noon." Here a note is added in the margin; "According to St. John, "sentence was not passed till the sixth hour, (noon,) "and consequently the execution could not be till, the "afternoon; but Mark says expressly, he was crucified "at the third hour—nine in the morning.

Here certainly is a difficulty; but the learned have informed us that St. John parted the days as we do, at midnight*, *contrary* both to the Roman and Jewish custom; the sixth hour, therefore, is not noon, but six o'clock in the morning, when sentence was passed; and various circumstances might take place, added to the slowness of the procession, to retard the execution till nine, the very time fixed by St. Mark. St. John's method of dividing the day was not Jewish or Roman, as it has been said, but ASIATIC. St. John either learned or taught this method in Asia Minor, where were seven churches, which differed from others in the time of keeping Easter; and affirmed, that they followed, in this variation of times and seasons, the institution of St. John; a circumstance which is very material, as it shews that St. John had turned his attention to the regulation of time.

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* According to the *Neuchthemeron*.

Dr. Townson, to whom every student of the LITERAL Gospel is much indebted, advances other arguments on this head, for which I refer to his Discourses.

It is inconsistent with my ideas of propriety to quote many of Mr. Paine's objections*; and indeed my limits will not admit a full examination of his book, if I were inclined to go through it, or, on the present occasion, thought it necessary.

In answer to what Mr. Paine has said against that part of the evangelical history which relates to the *interment*, *resurrection*, and *ascension* of our Saviour, I refer the reader to another volume of Dr. Townson's, expressly written on these subjects, if any one thinks it necessary to re-consider them, on account of Mr. Paine's objections. My opinion is, that they who have the *witness of the Spirit*, will not be at all concerned about Mr. Paine's cavils, except from the benevolent motive of endeavouring to prevent their ill effect on the thoughtless and malignant part of mankind, who may be confirmed in their neglect or hatred of Christianity by his virulent invective against it.

Those who believe, not only with an *historical* faith, but with the FAITH THAT GOD GIVETH; not only in the letter, written on perishable materials, but also, in the Spirit, the everlasting Gospel of *immediate* grace, will not be in the least danger of WAVERING, even if the infidels could prove that the scriptures are merely human narratives, with the errors of humanity.

It is presumptuously said by Hosius, bishop of Warmia in Poland, "We have now bid adieu to the scrip-"tures, having seen so many, not only different, but

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* I would not cull the flowers of those weeds, whose roots I wish to destroy.

" contrary interpretations of them. Let us rather hear " God himself speak, than apply ourselves, or trust our " salvation, to those jejune elements. There is no " need," he proceeds, " of being skilful in the law and " the scriptures, but of being taught of God. That " labour is ill employed," says the prelate, " that is " bestowed on the scriptures; for the scripture is a " creature, and a beggarly element." Far be it from us to think so. Christ commanded his immediate *hearers* to search the *scriptures;* and St. Paul says, " they are " *profitable* for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for " instruction in righteousness, that the man of God may " be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all *good works;*" that is, they are *profitable*, or conducive to the improvement of us in morality, as well as in the true doctrine. But although we cannot say what Hosius erroneously said; yet we may say, because the scripture says it, " God's *grace* is sufficient for us"—his grace *mediately* afforded by his word, and *immediately* by his actual influence; and having the TEACHING OF GOD, we shall not renounce our faith, though the Chubbs and the Paines should find matter for censure or ridicule in all the written books, from Genesis to the Apocalypse. FAITH, we read and know, is the gift of God; and he it is who *worketh in us* both to will and to do of his good pleasure.

" The word," says Dr. Ridley, " has not power of " itself to work, in our UNDERSTANDINGS, a faith in " God, nor to influence the WILL to a repentance from " *dead works*, without the Holy Ghost."

But he in whom the Holy Ghost has worked a faith in God, and whose will the Holy Ghost has influenced to repentance from dead works, may stand fast in the faith, rooted and established, in defiance of all that has been said by men engrossed by this world, and possessing its wisdom; men who have arisen in almost every age, and confirmed the Christian doctrine, by promoting its discussion, and awakening Christians from the slumber of security.

" When," says Dr. Watts, " we are attacked with " argument to baffle our faith, and when false doctrines " blow strong, and carry away many, how shall we be " able to stand our ground, and hold fast our faith in " Christ, if we have not the *inward witness*, the BEGINNING OF ETERNAL LIFE? Therefore it is that so many " Christians WAVER and are led away, because they feel " so little of the efficacy of the Holy Ghost in their " hearts.

If this then be the cause of *wavering* and falling away from Christ, I hope the believers in Christianity, and lovers of their fellow-creatures, will second, by their own endeavours, this attempt of mine, to promote the prevalence of a belief in the *energy* of the HOLY GHOST. The attempt is exposed to calumny and violent opposition. But every thing is to be borne with patience, in the cause of God and man.

Mr. Paine professes to be a believer in God, and a friend to man. It is, indeed, astonishing, that an advocate for the *rights of man* should set his face against the Gospel of Jesus Christ; for it is certain that the Gospel is the book, of all that were ever written, that favours most the rights of man, and the cause of equal liberty. Jesus Christ abolished slavery in Europe. Jesus Christ has humbled the rich and mighty. Jesus Christ has given a consequence to the POOR*, which they never possessed amid the boasted freedom of Greece and Rome. Jesus Christ has done more to destroy the insolent distinctions which arose from the spirit of tyranny, than was ever done before or after him; and Jesus Christ suffered death for this benefaction to all mankind, as a seditious innovator, and an enemy to Cæsar. Jesus Christ is therefore entitled to the gratitude of every friend to truth, justice, and humanity, even if he were no more than a man, and his religion untrue. What have Sydney, Hampden, Locke, done or said, with such effect, in the cause of liberty, and in favour of the mass of mankind, as Jesus Christ? Let then all the friends of liberty and man be lovers of Jesus Christ; and let not their zeal for reforming the corruptions of Christianity, caused by statesmen, wishing to render it subservient to political views, lead them to renounce the comfortable, liberal, equalizing doctrines of the *genuine* Gospel.

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* The New Testament abounds with passages, expressive of indignation against those among RICH men, who *abuse* wealth and power, for the purposes of oppression, cruelty, and despotism. As a specimen, I quote the following from the Epistle of St. JAMES.

" Go to, now, ye RICH men; weep and howl for your miseries " that shall come upon you.

The Gospel recommends PEACE, and infallibly produces, by the Spirit's benign influence, such dispositions of mind, as must of necessity, if they were to prevail among the rulers of the world, put an end to all offensive war. It has not yet done so, for it has not yet sufficiently prevailed among the rulers of the world. But it has certainly softened the rigours of war; a favourable presage of its future efficacy, in totally abolishing it.

> "Your riches are corrupted, and your garments are moth-eaten.
> "Your gold and silver is cankered, and the rust of them shall "be a witness against you, and shall eat your flesh as it were fire: "ye have heaped treasure together for the last days.
> "Behold the HIRE OF THE LABORERS WHICH HAVE REAPED "DOWN YOUR FIELDS, which is of you kept back by fraud, "crieth; and the cries of them that have REAPED are entered "into the ears of the Lord of Sabaoth.
> "Ye have lived in pleasure on the earth, and been wanton; ye "have nourished your hearts, as in a *day* of SLAUGHTER:
> "Ye have *condemned* and *killed* the JUST." JAMES, V. 1—6.

I wish Mr. Paine, as a politician and a philanthropist, if he be such, not to oppugn the great promoter of PEACE and LIBERTY. As a fellow man, (I wish I could add, a fellow Christian,) I warn him from the kindest motives, to beware lest he be guilty of blasphemy against the Holy Ghost.

Mr. Paine himself says, "*The great trait in the character of Jesus Christ is PHILANTHROPY.*" Why should Mr. Paine, then, oppose the prevalence of his benign doctrines? Christianity is a friend to *order*, but an enemy to *despotism* of every kind and degree. Why should Mr. Paine, then, join with the wicked despots of the earth, in the endeavour to exterminate Christianity? The late KING OF PRUSSIA, the greatest despot and butcher of mankind, was the *prince* of the *unbelievers*. He made infidelity a fashion in France; and behold the consequences! May they never extend to this country; where, God grant that LIBERTY may continue unimpaired by despotism or licentiousness; and RELIGION flourish, uncorrupted by hypocrisy or superstition, and unshaken by the assaults of infidelity.

No. II.

SINCE, in conformity to the Scriptures, I have recommended PRAYER* as one of the best modes of obtaining the *evidence*, and experiencing the *excellence* of the Christian religion, I think it expedient to add

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[*] Πολυ ισχυει ΔΕΗΣΙΣ ΔΙΚΑΙΟΥ ΕΝΕΡΓΟΥΜΕΝΗ.
Jam. v. 16.

This is translated, "The effectual fervent prayer of the righteous man availeth much," which is tautology—for an *effectual* prayer, of course, *availeth*. It should be translated, "The prayer of a righteous or just man, being ENERGIZED by the inward operation of the Spirit, availeth much."

some directions to facilitate the proper performance of this duty; and, for the sake of AUTHORITY, I have selected them from Bishop WILKINS, the first divine and philosopher of his age.

"The first and chief matter to be prayed for, is the " sanctification of our natures—that God's *kingdom may* " *come* into our hearts—that he would give unto us *a* " *heart, and put a new Spirit within us*—that he would " take from us our stony heart, and bestowed upon us " hearts of flesh—that he would put within us the law " of the spirit of life, which may make us free from the " law of sin and death—that we may put on the new " man, which, after God, is created in righteousness " and true holiness—that we may be regenerate, and " become new creatures, being borne again of that in- " corruptible seed, the word of God.

" That God would grant us, according to the riches " of his glory, to be strengthened with might by his " Spirit in the inward man.

" That he would establish our hearts unblameable in " holiness before God, even our Father, at the coming " of the Lord Jesus Christ, with all his saints.

" That the Spirit of Christ may dwell in us—that we " may continue in the grace of God, and in the faith, " grounded and settled, and may not be moved away " from the hope of the Gospel.

" Of this kind is the petition of *David* for himself— " *Create in me a clean heart, O Lord, and renew a right* " *spirit within me*. And the Apostle for others—The " God of peace sanctify you throughout, that your " whole spirit, and soul, and body may be preserved " blameless unto the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ.

" Ezekiel, xxxvi. 26. Rom. viii. 7. Eph. iv. 24. 1 Pet. i. 23.
" Eph. iii. 16. 1 Thess. iii. 13. Rom. viii. 11. Acts, xiii. 43.
" Col. i. 13. Psal. li. 10. 1 Thess. v. 23.

“ That we may be *transformed by the renewing of our minds*—that we may be able to have a *spiritual discerning of the things of God;* being wise to that which is good, but simple and harmless to that which is evil.

“ That he would purge our consciences from DEAD WORKS, to serve the *living* God.

“ That they may be tender of his glory, and, our own good; truly performing the offices which belong unto them, both in accusing and excusing us, according to the several occasions.

“ That he would *circumcise our hearts*, that we may *set our affections on things above, and not on earthly matters*—that we may not be deceived with false appearances, but may *approve the things that are most excellent.*

“ That he would reform and sanctify our *wills*, that we may in every thing submit them unto his; *delighting to do his will; not seeking our own will, but the will of him that sent us.*

“ That he would rectify our *memories*, making them more faithful in *retaining* all such holy lessons as we shall learn, in recalling them to mind, according to opportunities; that we may be always ready to *stir up our minds by way of remembrance*, that we may never forget God.

“ And so (for our parts, or outward man,) that we may become the *temple of God where his Spirit may dwell:* that we may *present our bodies a living* sacrifice, *holy, acceptable to God, which is our reasonable service:* that all our parts and *members may be instruments of righteousness unto holiness.*

“ Rom. xii. 2. 1 Cor. ii. iv. Rom. xvi. 19. Heb. ix. 14.
“ Rom. ii. 29. Col. iii. 2. Phil. i. 10. Ps. xl. 8. Joh. v. 30.
“ 2 Pet. iii. 1. Deut. viii. 11. 1 Cor. iii. 16. Rom. xii. 1.
“ Ib. vii. 13—19. Ib. vii. 18.

" In which desires we may strengthen our faith with " such arguments as these:

" God only is *able for this great work: in us dwelleth* " *nothing that is good.* It is he that must *work in us* " *both to will and to do of his good pleasure.* It is not in " our power to regenerate ourselves; for *we are not born* " *of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of* " *man;* (that is, of natural created strength,) *but of God.* " And he is able to do *exceeding abundantly above all* " *that we can ask or think.* It is as easy for him to " make us good, as to bid us be so.

" He is *willing*, and hath promised to *give unto us a* " *new Spirit:* to *put his law into our inward parts, to* " *write it in our hearts. And if men that are evil know* " *how to give good gifts to their children, how much more* " *shall our Heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to them* " *that ask him?* He hath professed it to be his own will, " *even our sanctification*; and he cannot deny us the per" formance of his own will. He hath promised, that " those who *hunger and thirst after righteousness, shall* " *be filled.* And therefore, if he has in any measure " given us this hunger, we need not doubt that he will " give us this *fulness* likewise. He hath said that *he* " *delights to dwell with the sons of men.* And what rea" son have we to doubt the success of our desires, when " we beg of him to do that which he delights in?

" The next thing to be prayed for, is the obedience " of our lives, answerable to that in the Lord's Prayer— " thy will be done on earth as it is in Heaven. And " here, likewise, we are to petition for spiritual grace, " and abilities, both to *perform*, and to *continue*, and to " *increase* in all holy duties.

" Phil. ii. 13. John. i. 13. Eph. iii. 20. Ezek. xxxvi. 26.
" Jer. xxxi. 33. Luke, xi. 13. Thes. iv. 3. Mat. v. 6.
" Prov, viii, 31. Psal. xxiii. 3.

“ For the *performance* of them, That he would *lead*
“ *us into the paths of righteousness*—that *with simplicity*
“ *and Godly sincerity we may have our conversation in*
“ *this world*—that *denying all ungodliness and worldly*
“ *lusts, we may live soberly, righteously, and godly, in this*
“ *present world*—that God would *give us grace, whereby*
“ *we may serve him acceptably with reverence and godly*
“ *fear*—that we may *not any more be conformed unto this*
“ *world*—that *being dead unto sin, we may live unto righteousness:*
“ *not any longer spending the rest of our time in*
“ *the flesh, to the lusts of men, but to the will of God*—that
“ *the time past of our lives may suffice to have served divers*
“ *lusts*—that for the future we may *walk as obedient children,*
“ *not fashioning ourselves according to the former*
“ *lusts of our ignorance; but as he who has called us is holy,*
“ *so we may be holy in all manner of conversation.*

“ To this purpose is that desire of David, *O that my*
“ *ways were directed to keep thy statutes!* And in another
“ place, *Teach me to do thy will, for thou art my God: let*
“ *thy good Spirit lead me into the land of uprightness.*
“ Elsewhere—*Shew me thy ways, O Lord, and teach me*
“ *thy paths: lead me into thy truth, and teach me; for thou*
“ *art the God of my Salvation. Teach me thy ways, O*
“ *Lord, and I will walk in thy truth; unite my heart to*
“ *fear thy name.*

“ For our *continuance* in them—*That we may serve*
“ *him without fear, in holiness and righteousness before*
“ *him, all the days of our lives:* being *stedfast and unmoveable,*
“ *always abounding in the work of the Lord*—
“ *Holding faith and a good conscience*—*Patiently continuing*
“ *in well doing, without weariness, as knowing that in*
“ *due time we shall reap, if we faint not*—*Holding fast*

“ 2 Cor. i. 12. Tit. ii. 12. Heb. xii. 28. Rom. xii. 2.
“ 1 Pet. ii. 21. Ib. iv. 2, 3. Ib. i. 14. Psal. cxix. 5.
“ Ib. cxliii. 10. Ib. xxv. 4, 5. Ib. lxxxvi. 11. Luke, i. 74, 75.
“ 1 Cor. xv. 18.

" *the profession of our faith, without wavering*—that our
" hearts *may be established with grace;* that amidst all
" our outward changes and losses, we may still hold fast
" our integrity.

" Thus the Apostle prays for the *Thessalonians*, that
" God would *establish them in every good word and work.*

" For our *increase* in them—That God would make
" all grace to abound *towards us*—that we *always having*
" *all-sufficiency to all things, may abound to every good*
" *work*—that we may *be strong in the Lord, and in the*
" *power of his might:* being *filled with the fruits of righte-*
" *ousness, unto the glory and praise of God*—that *forget-*
" *ting those things which are behind, and reaching unto*
" *those things which are before, we may continually press*
" *towards the mark for the prize of the high calling of God.*

" Thus doth the Apostle pray for the *Hebrews*—*The*
" *God of peace make you perfect in every good work, to*
" *do his will, working in you that which is well-pleasing*
" *in his sight.*—And *Epaphras*, for the Colossians—
" That they might stand perfect and complete in all
" the will of God.

" Next to the precepts of the law, we are to consider
" the duties which the Gospel requires of us, namely that
" we should *repent* and *believe*—that we should be careful
" to *perform*, to *continue*, and *increase* in all those par-
" ticular duties and graces which are comprehended
" under those two general heads.

" So that from hence we are directed to pray,

" For *repentance*—That since God hath, *in love to our*
" *souls*, vouchsafed unto us, in his Gospel, this privilege
" of *repentance*, which the covenant of works did not

" 1 Tim. i. 19. Rom. ii. 7. Gal. vi. 9. Heb. x. 23.
" Ib. xiii. 9. Job, ii. 3. 1 Thes. ii. 17. 2 Cor. ix. 8. 1 Thes.
" iv. 1. Eph. vi. 10. Phil. i. 11. Ib. iii. 14. Heb. xiii 20, 21.
" Col. iv. 12. Acts, xi. 18. Psal. li. 17. 2 Cor. vii. 10.

admit of, that he would also give us hearts for it, *granting us repentance unto life*—that he would convince us of the danger, and folly, and pollution of our sins, enabling us to mourn over them; bestowing upon us *broken and contrite spirits*—dissolving our stony hearts into that *goly sorrow, which worketh repentance to salvation not to be repented of*—That we may search and try our ways, and turn unto the Lord—*Bringing forth fruits meet for repentance*—Labouring *to draw nigh unto God, by cleansing our hands, and purifying our hearts.*

“ For *faith*—That God would discover to us the great need of a Saviour; and since he hath set forth *his Son to be a propitiation through faith in his blood, and hath made him the author of eternal salvation to all that obey him*, that he would win over our souls to an earnest endeavour of acquaintance with him, and high esteem of him.

“ That God, *who commandeth the light to shine out of darkness, would shine into our hearts, to give us the light of the knowledge of the glory of God, in the face of Jesus Christ*—that he would make us more especially inquisitive after the saving experimental knowledge of him, in whom are laid up the *treasures of wisdom and knowledge;* whom to know is wisdom, and eternal life.

“ That he would *count us worthy of his holy calling, and fulfil in us all the good pleasure of his goodness, and the work of faith with power*—that *the name of the Lord Jesus Christ may be glorified in us, and we in him.*

“ That Christ *may dwell in our hearts by faith, that we may be rooted and grounded in love; may be able to comprehend with all saints what is the breadth, and length, and depth, and height, and know the love of Christ, which*

“ Lam. iii. 40. Mat. iii. 8. James, iv. 8. Rom. iii. 25.
“ Heb. v. 9. 2 Cor. iv. 6. Col. ii. 3. 2 Thes. i. 11, 12.

" *passeth knowledge, that we may be filled with all the ful-*
" *ness of God.*

" That we may truly value *the exceeding riches of his* " *grace, in his kindness towards us through Christ Jesus*— " Glorying in his Gospel, *as being the power of God to* " *salvation—counting all things but loss and dung for the* " *excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus, that we may* " *win him, and be found in him; not having our own righte-* " *ousness, which is of the law, but that which is through the* " *faith of Christ.*

" That in all estates and conditions, we may learn to " *live by faith.*

" In regard of our *temporal* life, with all the various " circumstances of it, whether *prosperity*, that by his " grace of faith, we may keep our hearts in an holy " frame of humility, meekness, disengagement from " the world, and all outward confidences; or *adversity*, " wherein this grace may serve to sweeten our afflic- " tions, to support us under them, teaching us to profit " by them, to bear them meekly, to triumph over them; " assuring the heart, that nothing is but by the disposal " of God's providence, who is infinitely wise, and mer- " ciful, and faithful.

" In regard of *spiritual* life, both for our own *justifi-* " *cation*, that we may not expect it from our own ser- " vices or graces; *not having our own righteousness, but* " *that which is through the faith of Christ, the righteous-* " *ness which is of God by faith.* And so for the life of " *sanctification; that we may not live unto ourselves, but* " *unto him who died for us, and rose again*—that our *con-* " *versation may be as becometh the Gospel of Christ, stand-* " *ing fast in one spirit, with one mind, striving together for* " *the faith of the Gospel.* Always remembering that we " are not our own, but *bought with a price*, and therefore

" Eph. iii. 17. Ib. ii. 7. Rom. i. 16. Phil. iii. 8. Ib. iii. 9.
" 2 Cor. v. 15. Phil. i. 27.

" should make it our business to glorify Christ *with our* " *bodies and Spirits, which are his.*

" That he would work in us a *lively faith*, as may " make us rich in good works, that we may demean our- " selves as becomes *our professed subjection to the Gospel* " *of Christ; walking worthy of that vocation wherewith we* " *are called*, as becomes *children of light*—Being *holy in* " *all manner of conversation—putting on the Lord Jesus* " *Christ; exercising ourselves unto godliness*—Walking " uprightly, *according to the truth of the Gospel, diligently* " *following every good work*—Shewing, out of *a good con-* " *versation, our works, with meekness and wisdom*—That " we may *adorn the doctrine of God our Saviour in all* " *things*—Considering *that we are created in Christ Jesus* " *unto good works, that we should walk in them—Having* " *our conversation in Heaven; walking worthy of the Lord,* " *unto all pleasing, being fruitful in all good works.* That " every one of us who *professeth the name of Christ, may* " *depart from iniquity*—Because *for this reason was the* " *Gospel preached to those that are dead in sin, that they* " *may live according to God in Spirit.*

" That we may give all diligence, to add to our faith, " virtue; and to virtue, knowledge; and to knowledge, " temperance; and to temperance, patience; and to " patience, godliness; and to godliness, brotherly kind- " ness; and to brotherly kindness, charity; that these " things being in us, and abounding, we may not be bar- " ren or unfruitful in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus " Christ, but may hereby clear up unto ourselves the " evidence of our calling and election.

" That we may *deny all ungodliness and worldly lusts,* " *living soberly, righteously, and godly, in this present*

" 1 Cor. vi. 20. James, ii. 20. 2 Cor. ix. 13. Eph. iv. 2. " Ib. v. 8. Rom. xiii. 14. 1 Tim. iv. 7. Gal. ii. 14. 1 Tim. " v. 10. James, iii. 13. Tit. ii. 10. Eph. ii. 10. Phil. iii. 20. " Gal. i. 10. 2 Tim. xii. 19.

" *world, looking for that blessed hope, and that glorious* " *appearing of the great God, and our Saviour Jesus* " *Christ, who gave himself for us, that he might redeem us* " *from all iniquity, and purify unto himself a peculiar peo-* " *ple, zealous of good works*—considering that *he shall be* " *revealed from Heaven with his mighty angels, in flaming* " *fire, to take vengeance on those who obey not his Gospel,* " *who shall be punished with everlasting destruction, from* " *the presence of the Lord, and from the glory of his power,* " *when he shall come to be glorified in his saints, and to* " *be admired of all them that believe in that day—For if* " *he that despised Moses's law, died without mercy, under* " *two or three witnesses, of how much sorer punishment* " *shall he be thought worthy, who hath trodden under foot* " *the Son of God, and hath counted the blood of the cove-* " *nant an unholy thing; and hath done despite to the Spirit* " *of grace, who hath called us into his eternal glory by* " *Christ Jesus, would make us perfect, establish, strength-* " *en, settle us—That we may continue in the faith, ground-* " *ed and settled, and not be moved away from the hope of the* " *Gospel, being rooted and built up, and established in the* " *faith—laying aside every weight, and the sin that does so* " *easily beset us: and running with patience, the race that* " *is set before us—Holding fast our profession, without* " *wavering; that we may abide in Christ, and his words* " *may abide in us—Continuing in the things which we* " *have learned—Being faithful unto the death, that he* " *may bestow upon us a crown of life.*

" *That the word of Christ may dwell in us richly, in all* " *wisdom—that we may grow in grace, and in the know-* " *ledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ*—Being *fil-* " *led with the fruits of righteousness, which are by Jesus*

" 1 Pet. iv. 8. 2 Pet. i. 5—8. Tit. ii. 12, 13. 2 Thess. i. 7.
" Heb. x. 28. 1 Pet. vi 10. Col. i. 23. Ib. ii. 7. Heb. x. 1, 2.
" Ib. x. 23. John, xv. 7. 2 Tim. iii. 14.

“ *Christ; unto the glory and praise of God*—That we may
“ be strong in the grace that is in Christ Jesus.

“ That *having fought a good fight, and finished our course,*
“ *and kept the faith, we may receive the crown of righteousness,*
“ *which, at the last day, the Lord, the righteous*
“ *Judge, will bestow upon all those that love his appearing*—
“ That he would *carry us, through faith, unto salvation.*

“ And because, when we have reckoned all the duties
“ we can, we shall leave out many particulars, therefore,
“ for the supply of those which we cannot specify, we
“ may use some general form answerable to that exhortation
“ of the Apostle—That whatsoever things are true,
“ whatsoever things are honest, whatsoever things are
“ just, *whatsoever things are pure, whatsoever things are*
“ *lovely, whatsoever things are of good report, if there be*
“ *any virtue, and if there be any praise, that we may think*
“ *of and do these things.*

“ Being *blameless and harmless, the sons of God, without*
“ *rebuke, in the midst of a crooked and perverse nation,*
“ *among whom we may shine as lights in the world.*”

No. III.

ΩΔΑΙ ΠΝΕΥΜΑΤΙΚΑΙ. Eph. v. 19.

THE neglect of PSALMODY, in the congregations at large, has contributed very much to *damp* the ardour of devotion, and, consequently, to cause an *indifference* to the Christian religion. Less of instrumental, and more of vocal music, (in which all the people should unite with heart and voice,) would conduce greatly to the revival of decayed piety. It would render our

“ Rev. ii. 10. Col. iii. 16. 2 Pet. iii. 18. Phil. i. 11.
“ 2 Tim. iv. 7, 8. Phil. iv. 8. Ib. ii. 15.

religious assemblies interesting where they are now cold, and merely formal.

Psalmody, it is well known, is confined, in the greater part of country churches, to a few, and is become a matter of mere amusement, both to the hearers and performers. To many, it is tedious and disgustful.

The whole congregation, women and children, as well as men, should sing simple tunes, such as are easily learned, and, at the same time, deeply affect the the heart, while they please the ear. The instrument should not be so loud as to drown the voices. An organ, under the hands of an ambitious player, usually overcomes the melody of the voice, and grates discord on the ear of piety.

When all join, to the best of their power, in singing well-composed hymns, all must be affected; and psalmody will, like prayer, become a powerful means of grace. As it is now conducted, religion seems to have little or no concern with it. Some of the congregation sit with indifference or impatience; others divert themselves, as well as they can, with observing the grimaces of the singers; while one or two, *amateurs* and practitioners of music, lend an ear, as critics on the skill of the performers.

The soft and sweet melody, in some of the places of religious worship frequented by various dissenting congregations in London, is highly delightful to an uncorrupted ear, while it warms the heart with devotion, meliorates the disposition, and leaves the hearer full of pious sentiments to God, and charitable affections to man. As far as I am able to judge, psalmody requires immediate reformation.

The Apostles says, "Let the word of Christ dwell in "you richly, in all wisdom, teaching and admonishing

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* Col. iii. 16.

" one another in psalms, and hymns, and *spiritual* songs, " singing with GRACE in your hearts to the Lord."

Is this addressed only to ten or twelve persons in every congregation? Certainly it is addressed to all Christians; and there is no doubt but that Christianity would flourish more, if due attention were paid to psalmody. Many who are separated from the established church, are influenced, in their separation, by the efficacious method of deriving grace into their hearts, which they experience in their own assemblies, by the pleasing, melting strains of holy harmony.

No. IV.

A SHORT list of books, recommended to the choice of persons who are not professional students in divinity, but who, occupied in worldly business, read, in the intervals, for the sake of improvement in piety and morality. It is not expected that such persons should procure all which are here mentioned, but select those which they may best approve, or most conveniently obtain. Doubtless there are many more which might be recommended; but, considering for whom the books are designed, I am unwilling to enlarge the collection beyond reasonable limits. I have arranged them alphabetically.

Barrow's Works.
Beveridge's Private Thoughts.
Baxter's Works.
Butler's Analogy.
Collyer's Sacred Interpreter.
Doddridge's Rise and Progress.
——— Family Expositor.
——— Lectures.
Derham's Physico-Theology.
Edward's (John, of Cambridge) Works.
Earle on the Sacrament.
Gastrell's Institutes.
——— Certainty and Necessity of Religion in general.
——— Certainty of the Christian Revelation.
Gibson's Family Devotions.
Grey's Key to the Old Testament.
Hammond's practical Catechism
Hale's Contemplations.

Horne's Commentary on the Psalms.
Kettlewell's Works.
Kenn's Manual for Winchester Sholars.
Lowth's Directions for reading the Scriptures.
Lucas's Enquiry after Happiness.
Nelson's Works.
Norris's Works.
Owen's (Dr. John) Works.
Ostervald's Corruptions of Christianity.
Patrick's Works.
Pelling's Works.
Scott's Christian Life.
Stanhope's Thomas a Kempis.
Smith's (John) Select Discourses.
Spinckes's Devotions.
Taylor's (Bishop) Works.
Trapp's Discourses on the Gospel.
Watts's Works.
Wilson's (Bishop) Works.
Waterland's Works — if any choose to enter into learned disquisitions on points of controverted doctrine.

No. V.

I DO not advise the true Christian to enlist himself under any of the celebrated SYSTEM-MAKERS. Such attachments only tend to make *parties* in religion, and to destroy charity. The church of England is said to be *Calvinistical* in its Articles, while the majority of its ministers are *Armenians*.

Dr. Morley, afterwards Bishop of Winchester, being asked what the Arminians *held*, pleasantly answered—that they *held*—all the best bishoprics and deaneries in England.

The true follower of Jesus Christ will seek no other appellation than that of *Christian*. He will select the true doctrine, wherever he can find it, but be bigotted to no NAME under Heaven.

" *Doctrina Christi*," says Erasmus, " *quæ prius nesciebat* ΛΟΓΟΜΑΧΙΑΝ *cœpit a philosophiæ studiis pendere: hic erat primus gradus ecclesiæ ad deteriora prolabentis.*" The doctrine of Christ, which at first knew nothing of *verbal disputes*, began to depend on philosophical studies;

this was the first step which the church made in its progressive descent to a state of degeneracy.

On observing the various, and even contradictory tenets of the system-writers and their followers, one is tempted to exclaim with the poet,

> *O Cecita de la terrene menti,*
> *In qual profonda notte,*
> *In qual fosca caligine d'errore*
> *Son le nostr' alme immerse*
> *Quando tu non le illustri,* O SOMMO SOLE.
> *A che del saper vostro*
> *Insuperbite,* O MISERI MORTALI?
> *Questa parte di noi, che 'ntende, e vede,*
> *Non è nostra virtu, ma vien dal* CIELO.
>
> PASTOR FIDO, Act v. Sc. 6.

THE END.

TRANSLATIONS

OF THE PASSAGES FROM THE

GREEK, LATIN, AND FRENCH WRITERS,

QUOTED IN

CHRISTIAN PHILOSOPHY.

MOTTO TO THE TITLE PAGE.

"THIS kind of Philosophy is founded on the feelings of the "heart rather than on syllogisms; it consists in the actual con-"duct of life, rather than in disputatious theories; it is inspiration "more than erudition; it is the result of a total CHANGE pro-"duced in the mind supernaturally, rather than of a man's unas-"sisted reason." ERASMUS.

"Only be teachable; and you will have made a great profi-"ciency in this PHILOSOPHY. It supplies its own instructor, "even the SPIRIT, who imparts himself to none more readily "than to men of simple and artless minds. On the other hand, "while it condescends to the wants of the lowest among mankind, "it is an object of admiration to the highest. And what else is "the Christian *Philosophy*, (which Christ himself calls the *New* "*Birth*,) but the renewal of that nature in us, which was origi-"nally well constituted by its Author?" ERASMUS.

"The life-giving Spirit." 1 COR. XV. 45.

Page 13.

MOTTO TO THE INTRODUCTORY SECTION.

It is my object to inquire what is true; but not to acquiesce merely in the discovery of speculative truth; but to find out that doctrine, which, together with truth, unites PIOUS AFFECTIONS to God. SADOLET.

Page 24.

MOTTO TO SECTION II.

In what consists a faithful belief in Christ? It consists in a faithful obedience to his commandments.

SALVIAN. *de Gub. lib.* 3.

Page 36.

Mediately by the Word; immediately by the Spirit.

Page 85.

Neither let them ostentatiously put themselves off as *philosophers;* but labour to become men *taught of God.*

GREG. ix. *Ep. ad Univ. Paris.*

Page 87.

Here, brethren, you see a great and holy mystery. Instruction from externals are great assistances, and afford much useful admonition; but he, who teacheth the heart, hath his seat, from which he gives his lessons, in heaven. AUGUST. *Tr.* 3. *in* 1 *Joan.*

Page 104.

LEARNED I deem all those who have believed the Gospel. For why should they be called *unlearned* who (supposing they have learned nothing else) have learned from the Apostles' creed that *ultramundane Philosophy*, which neither a Pythagoras nor a Plato, but the Son of God himself, delivered to mankind; who have learned from Christ the end they should pursue and the way to pursue it? Wherever *true Holiness* exists, there also exists great Philosophy, and no common kind and degree of erudition. But yet among persons thus excellently learned, those are pre-eminent, to whom it is given by the Spirit's bountiful mercy, to instruct many in the ways of righteousness; on whom God has bestowed *lips*, not adorned with the meretricious arts of heathen eloquence, but richly furnished, by the unction of the Spirit, with heavenly Grace. ERASMUS, *Eccles.*

Page 113.

If a preceptor, a mere man, hesitates to give merely human instruction; for instance, lectures on Logic or Arithmetic, to a pupil who is drowsy, who yawns, or who is sick with the intemperance of yesterday; how much more will the heavenly Wisdom disdain to speak with those who are drunk with the pleasures of the world, and who, from a total neglect of heavenly things, sicken at the mention of them? ERASMUS.

These let him learn before the fumes of indigestion cloud over the faculties. HOR.

Pages 114, 115.

The season of Grace is, when God sends you some humiliating affliction, which withdraws you from the world, because you can no longer appear in it with honour. It is some disgrace thrown upon you by a master, to whom a base obsequiousness led you, in a thousand struggles, to sacrifice the interests of your conscience. It is the alienation of a friend, your connection with whom too often led you into the snares of vice, and kept you there. It is the loss of property, it is a disease, an uneasiness either domestic or from without; it is a state of suffering, when every thing, but God, becomes bitter to a man, when he finds no consolation but within himself; and when, disgusted with the vanity and vexation of human affairs, he begins to taste the sweetness of things heavenly. BRETONNEAU.

Page 120.

Between good men and God there subsists a friendship, under the mediation of virtue; a friendship do I say? It is more: It is an intimate union and resemblance. SENECA.

Page 121.

MOTTO TO SECTION XXVII.

In this part of literature alone, even what I do not understand, I yet revere. ERASMUS.

Page 130.

God causes to flow into the soul an unction which I cannot describe, but which fills, or satisfies it completely. BRETONNEAU.

Pages 143, 144.

For if the whole of the interposition of God consists in the clear proposal of the Gospel, opportunely made, why is omnipotence required for it? Why are those magnificent expressions applied by St. Paul to describe the *omnipotence* which God exerts in us? " The eyes of your understanding being enlightened, that ye may " know what is the *exceeding greatness of his power* to us ward, " who believe according to *the working of his mighty power*."

Is not this to extenuate the almighty energy of God, and almost reduce it to nothing? TURRETIN.

Page 148.

Immediate Grace, as the doctrine is taught by the orthodox, has nothing in common with enthusiasm, but differs from it in various respects.

1. Enthusiasm seeks *new* revelations *extrinsic* to the written word; but *immediate Grace* seeks none that are *new*, because it always accompanies the word, and aims at nothing more than to impress the word more forcibly on the mind.

2. According to the tenets of enthusiasm, objects which are impressed on the mind come not from any thing external, but are suggested within by the Spirit and by secret inspiration. But *here* (in the case of immediate Grace), the object is always supposed to come from something external, and indeed to be sought from the written word.

3. Enthusiasm is caused by sudden emotions, which precede all reasoning of discourse, and sometimes exclude them entirely. But the operation of the Spirit does not exclude, but takes with it, reasoning and the ready consent of the will.

Lastly, not to pursue any farther distinctions, enthusiasm does not produce a *change in the heart*, but affects the understanding, leaving the will unaltered; whence it happens that enthusiasm may exist in wicked men, as it appears to have done in the instance of Balaam and others; but the operation of Grace necessarily produces a change in the heart and a love of holiness.

TURRETIN.

Page 165.

But VULGAR as these things are, if men in high stations gave an example of them, as far as their stations admit, in their lives and conversations; if the clergy inculcated them in their sermons; if schoolmasters instilled them into the minds of their boys, in preference to those HIGHLY LEARNED MATTERS, with which they make such a parade;—then Christendom would not be disturbed by WARS almost without an interval of cessation;—then men would not every where be hurried on with the mad desire of heaping up riches without regard to right or wrong;—then all things, both sacred and profane, would not be every where involved in strife and confusion:—in a word, then we should be distinguished in something more essential than the mere name of Christians, and the ceremonies of the church, from those who openly and honestly avow themselves not to be professors of CHRISTIAN PHILOSOPHY. ERASMUS.

Page 169.

I am of opinion that the *genuine Philosophy of Christ* cannot be derived from any source so successfully, as from the books of the

Gospel and the Epistles of the Apostles, in which, if a man philosophises with a *pious spirit*, PRAYING rather than ARGUING, he will find that there is nothing conducive to the happiness of man and the performance of any duty of human life, which is not, in some of these writings, laid down, discussed, and determined in a complete and satisfactory manner. ERASMUS.

Page 171.

Our religion knows not to accept the persons of men; neither does it regard the external condition, but the internal disposition. It pronounces man a lord or a slave according to his morals. The only liberty in the sight of God is, not to be the servant of sin. The highest nobility before him is, to become illustrious for virtue.
Hieronymus ad Celantiam, *Ep.* 14.

Nobility is the preservation of the image of God, a resemblance of the great model of all excellence, both which are effected by reason and virtue. GREG. NAZ. in Orat. 11.

When I speak of nobility, I mean not that which the vulgar herd deem such. Far from it. I mean that which piety and good morals characterize; and a return to the first good, to the original state, from which human nature has fallen. Idem, in Orat. 23.

Page 178.

Give me a man who is choleric, abusive in his language, headstrong, and unruly; with a very few words, (the words of God,) I will render him as gentle as a lamb. Give me a greedy, miserly, close-fisted man; and I will presently return him to you a generous creature freely bestowing his money by handfuls. Give me a cruel blood-thirsty wretch; instantly his ferocity shall be transformed to a truly mild and merciful disposition. Give me an unjust man, a foolish man, a sinful man; and on a sudden, he shall become honest, wise, and virtuous. In one LAVER (the laver of regeneration) all his wickedness shall be washed away. So great is the efficacy of the divine (or Christian) Philosophy; that when once admitted into the human heart, it expels FOLLY, the parent of all vice; and in accomplishing this great end, there is no occasion for any expence, no absolute need of books or deep and long study or meditation. The benefit is conferred gratuitously, easily, expeditiously; provided that the ears and the heart thirst after the wisdom (from above). Did any, or could any, of the heathen philosophers accomplish such important purposes as these? LACT. *Inst.* Lib, ii. C. 26.

Page 184.

The Spirit of God is delicate, *i. e.* easily disgusted with moral impurity. TERTULL.

Pages 227, 228.

They know not what they would have, but are continually seeking CHANGE OF PLACE, in the hope of laying down the burden of time. Tired of home, one man leaves his noble mansion, as often as he can, and then returns to it all on a sudden; just as miserable abroad as at home. Another drives his horses full speed to his country-house, dashing along as if he had heard the house was on fire, and was hastening to extinguish the flames. He no sooner sets his foot within the doors, than he begins to yawn or falls fast asleep; striving to forget himself in slumbers;—or else he turns the horses' heads and hurries post haste up to town again. Thus every one tries to run away from himself; but when he cannot escape, he reluctantly bears the unavoidable evil, and pines, a self-tormentor, in unwilling solicitude.

LUCRETIUS.

Page 253.

The human mind is *perfected* not so much by *learning* divine things, as by passively receiving the impressions of Divinity.

Men are deceived on this account, because they either adopt religion to the neglect of philosophy; or study philosophy alone, to the neglect of religion; whereas the one without the other cannot be what it strictly ought to be.

LACTANTIUS *de falsa Sapient. lib.* 3.

Pages 255, 256.

Our revealed religion is not, and indeed could not be any thing else but the law of nature advanced to perfection.

Discours sur le Theisme, par M. de VOLTAIRE.

But now, those topics which are asserted to be *peculiar* to Philosophy, all of us (*Rhetoricians* as well as *Philosophers*) treat of indiscriminately; for who, even the worst of men, hesitates to prate about the JUST, the EQUITABLE, and the GOOD?

QUINT. Procemium.

Page 258.

From the time of St. Austin, scarcely any word has been in more frequent use than the word GRACE, when the subject of discourse is a man's return to a sounder mind, and the *power* to which that return is to be ascribed. But when the meaning of that word is asked of them who use it, they can give no clear and definitive answer. Hence it happened that in France a Jesuit of a facetious turn jocosely said, "That this divine Grace which made "such a noise in the schools, and produced such wonderful effects "on the minds of men; this Grace, at once so efficacious and de- "lightful, which triumphs over the hardness of the human heart, "without destroying free will, was after all nothing more than "what the French express by the phrase, *Je ne scai quoi.*"

Clerici, Ars Crit. p. 2. s. 1. c. 8.

Page 274.

The accurate and certain knowledge of actual *experience*, surpasses all that can be taught by the persuasive powers of oratory or composition. DIOD. SIC. *Hist. lib.* 1.

Pages 283, 284.

No man is a good man without the assistance of God.

SENECA, *Epist.* 41.

God dwelling in the human body. *Epist.* 31.

All mankind hold the opinion, that external advantages, such as vineyards, corn fields, olive gardens, abundance of all the various fruits of the earth, lastly every thing that tends to the accommodation and prosperity of life, is derived from the Gods; but no man ever acknowledged himself indebted to God for his VIRTUE. Undoubtedly this judgment is right and reasonable. For we are *properly* commended for our *virtue*, and we *justly* glory in our virtue; which could not be, if it were a GIFT OF GOD, and not a possession derived entirely from ourselves. But different is the case when we receive any accession of honour and fortune, or if we get any unlooked-for advantage or avoid any imminent evil; for then, as we thank God for it, so we assume no merit or praise to ourselves on the occasion.

Did any man ever return thanks to the Gods that he was a good man? No; he returns thanks to the Gods because he is a rich man, because he has received some public honour, or because he enjoys a state of safety.

To return then to the point I am maintaining. It is the unanimous opinion of mankind, that success or good fortune in the world is to be sought of God, but that wisdom is to be derived from one's self entirely. CICERO, *de Nat. Deor. lib.* 3. *c.* 36.

Our country (Rome) as well as Greece has produced many extraordinary men, not one of whom, I believe, would ever have been such, but by the assistance of God.

Cic. *de Nat. Deor. lib.* 2.

No man was ever a great man without something of divine inspiration. Cic.

Is there any man of any country in the world who by the mere guidance of Nature could attain to virtue? Cic. *Leg.*

Men stand in need of God as an assistant and co-operator.

Max. Tyr. *Diss.* 22.

Page 323.

MOTTO TO APPENDIX NO. III.

Songs dictated or inspired by the Holy Spirit. Eph. v. 19.

Page 327.

O blindness of our earth-incrusted minds!
In what a midnight shade, what sombrous clouds
Of error are our souls immersed, when thou,
O Sun supreme! no longer deign'st to shine.
Why of the little knowledge ye attain
Vaunt ye yourselves, poor mortals as ye are,
For that within us which thus thinks and sees,
Not to ourselves we owe: it comes from Heaven.

Pastor Fido, Act v. Sc. 6.

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